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MAY 2017



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The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

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MARKETPOINT

The May issue offers a bouquet of news hand-picked to help your sales blossom. Enjoy the fresh focus.

- The cover story is “hand-sells,” an area critical to retailers. Explore the **art** of promoting and selling brands and how it can move those bottles that sit quietly, deliciously waiting.
- Pernod Ricard USA gets a turn in the spotlight, with everything you need to know about some of the most important **brands** on the shelf and behind the bar today.
- “Gin Quiz” kicks off a new format for category features, straddling education and trend-watching, all while sharing trade **secrets** to selling.



- **Trends** abound in articles about the new wave of vermouth, cinnamon whiskey showdown, craft beer slowdown and a wine family profile.
- Take a look at local **trade** in “Retail Review,” this month featuring Mac’s Liquor Mart and “Serving Up,” with a creative cocktail from Brix Restaurant at Newport Vineyards.
- Local **news** in the “Around Town” pages offers insight into just what a bounty spring can bring.
- Love the magazine, but left your copy at the bar or counter? Wish you could view the brand and price index any time, on any device? Wish you could view ratings, shop and order too? You can! Make sure your **subscription** is working for you. A password for access to our site is all-included with cool tools when you are on the run. Call us to get started. Tell your industry friends; we’ll sign them up too!



ON THE COVER

Photograph by Andrei Romania.
Imagebrief.

GLOBAL CRAFT BEER MARKET TO EXCEED \$500 BILLION BY 2025

The global craft beer market is expected to reach \$502.9 billion USD by 2025, according to a new report by Grand View Research, Inc. The market will witness substantial growth over the forecast



period on account of the rising demand for low alcohol by volume (ABV) and flavored beer. Australia, Belgium, Germany, the U.S. and New Zealand are the “major craft beer producing countries” with more than 65 percent of the overall production in terms of value as well as volume. Belgian is the “most preferred” beer among the major craft beer consuming countries; pale ales, IPAs and amber ales were noted as “widely preferred” consumer choices.

U.S. CRAFT BEER MARKETS STATS FOR 2016 SHOW GROWTH

The Brewers Association shared 2016 data on U.S. craft brewing growth. With more than 5,300 breweries operating in 2016, small and independent craft brewers represent 12.3 percent market share by volume of the overall



beer industry, producing 24.6 million barrels, a 6-percent rise in volume on a comparable base and a 10-percent increase in retail dollar value. Retail dollar value was estimated at \$23.5 billion, representing 21.9 percent market share. Microbreweries and brewpubs delivered 90 percent of the craft brewer growth. The number of operating breweries grew 16.6 percent, totaling 5,301 breweries, consisting of 3,132 microbreweries, 1,916 brewpubs, 186 regional craft breweries and 67 large or otherwise non-craft brewers. Throughout 2016, 826 new breweries opened while 97 closed.

DON SEBASTIANI & SONS ANNOUNCES EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

Don Sebastiani & Sons appointed Tom Hawkins as Chief Operating Officer and Omar Percich, Chief Financial



Officer. Hawkins joined Don Sebastiani & Sons in 2009 as the Vice President of Finance. His responsibilities widely included finance, operations, winemaking, marketing, human resources and information technology. Percich, who was hired in March 2017, will now succeed Hawkins as Chief Financial Officer. Most recently, he served as Controller and CFO at Foley Family Wines. Percich will oversee all aspects of finance, accounting, compliance, customer service and IT services.

HOUSE OF ANGOSTURA NAMED “WORLD CLASS” DISTILLERY AT WSA

The House of Angostura received the title of World Class Distillery for 2017 at the World Spirits Awards. The distillery also earned Gold Medals for five of its rums, Angostura Reserva, Angostura



1824, Angostura 1919, Angostura 7-Year-Old and 5-Year-Old Rum and a Gold Medal for Amaro di Angostura. Newly launched Angostura 1787 received a Silver Medal. “We take deep pride in our almost 200-year history of quality, creativity and innovation and we are extremely pleased to be recognized by the WSA,” said Genevieve Jodhan, Chief Executive Officer of Angostura.

E. & J. GALLO ACQUIRES NAPA’S STAGECOACH VINEYARD

E. & J. Gallo has agreed to purchase Stagecoach Vineyard of Napa, known for its dramatic terrain, rolling hills and its reputation for “exceptional



wine grapes.” The vineyard is located in the Pritchard Hill Region and the Atlas Peak appellation and features 600 acres of planted vines with numerous soil depths, soil types and microclimates for premier grape growing. Stagecoach Vineyard sells grapes to more than 90 wineries, from boutique wineries to large-scale companies, and more than 30 wineries have the Stagecoach name on the bottle. Gallo has agreed to honor all grape contracts with existing Stagecoach Vineyard customers.

MAISON FERRAND PURCHASES RUM DISTILLERY IN BARBADOS

Maison Ferrand of Cognac, France acquired the historic West Indies Rum Distillery in Barbados, which has been producing rum continually



since the 19th century. This purchase marks the first distillery acquisition outside of France. The company also owns the Plantation Rum brand with global distribution in 68 countries and produces Cognac and gin at its facility in Cognac, France. Along with the purchase of West Indies Rum Distillery, Maison Ferrand will have access to Jamaican rum, since West Indies Rum Distillery is one-third owner of the National Jamaican Rum Company, Monymusk Distillery and Long Pond Distillery.

SIDNEY FRANK IMPORTING ANNOUNCES NAME CHANGE

Sidney Frank Importing Company (SFIC) announced the company will now operate under the name Mast-Jägermeister US, effective immediately. The name change marks a new era for Mast-Jägermeister in the United States after acquiring SFIC in August 2015, which served as the exclusive importer of Jägermeister. “This is more than a name change; the team of Sidney Frank Importing Company has truly become a part of the brand family. As our number one global market, the U.S. is a significant factor for our recent successful growth in already over 120 markets,” said Michael Volke, Chief Executive Officer, Mast-Jägermeister. The company plans to relocate its offices in June of 2017 from New Rochelle, New York to White Plains, New York, where it will occupy a 30,000-square-foot office at 10 Bank Street.



BULLEIT DISTILLING CO. CELEBRATES NEW DISTILLERY

Bulleit Distilling Co. hosted a ribbon cutting in March to formally celebrate the opening of its state-of-the-art modern whiskey distillery in Shelbyville, Kentucky. Governor Matt Bevin and other elected officials joined Founder Tom Bulleit for the ceremony and distillery tour. The distillery, which employs about 30 people on its 300-acre campus, celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. The 300-acre, \$115 million distillery can, at full capacity, produce 1.8 million gallons annually, and along with its four barrel houses, hosts the first industrial solar array in Shelby County, which will collect enough energy to run all on-site mobile equipment.



THE WINEBOW GROUP NAMES HUSTON TO NATIONAL SPIRIT DIRECTOR

The Winebow Group promoted Monique Huston to National Spirits Director. She previously served as the Director of Spirits Midwest since she joined the company in 2015. She will be based in Chicago and report to Chris Mitchell, the Senior Vice President of Portfolio Management. In her new role, Huston will work closely with spirit brand managers and education specialists across the 20-state distribution network of The Winebow Group. She will also oversee portfolio management, strategic planning, operations and education initiatives.



HBO AND VINTAGE WINE ESTATES RELEASE “GAME OF THRONES” INSPIRED WINES

Vintage Wine Estates, in partnership with Winemaker Bob Cabral and HBO, released “Game of Thrones” Chardonnay, Red Blend of syrah, tempranillo and petite sirah, and a Cabernet Sauvignon, to pair with the Emmy award-winning drama. Cabral, an award-winning winemaker, has made more than 100 wines scoring 95 points or higher. “I’m a huge ‘Game of Thrones’ fan, and these wines capture the complexity of the drama,” said Cabral. “But the wines also have great pedigree. We source grapes from premier vineyard sites and use the finest winemaking techniques to create wines of incredible richness and texture,” he said. The labels depict the houses of the Seven Kingdoms.



USC ANNOUNCES RATINGS AND AWARD 2017 RESULTS

The Ultimate Spirits Challenge® spirits competition announced the winners and full results for the 2017 Challenge. Ultimate Spirits Challenge (USC), now in its seventh year, awarded 43 Chairman’s Trophy winners, USC’s highest award of excellence, and named 213 finalists. In 2017, USC also added a component of cocktail evaluations. Judges taste and assess a spirit’s “mixability factor” in classic cocktail recipes in spirits categories. Chairman’s Trophy winners included Vodka, Flavored: Van Gogh Dutch Caramel; Unflavored: Purity. Gin categories London Dry: Tanqueray, World: Ferdinand’s Saar Dry Gin. Liqueur: Grand Marnier Cuvée du Centenaire. Mezcal: Rey Campero Tepextate Joven. Rum: Appleton Estate 21 Years Old; Rhum Agricole: Clément VSOP, Spiced Rum: Don Q Oak Barrel. Complete results can be found on www.ultimate-beverage.com.



REAL MCCOY RUM EXPANDS MANAGEMENT TEAM

Real McCoy Spirits, the makers of the award-winning rum inspired by legendary Prohibition rum runner Bill McCoy, announced the appointment of John Esposito as Chairman. Esposito brings 40 years of leadership experience in all three tiers of the distilled spirits industry to the role. In his role as Chairman, Esposito is responsible for helping build strategic relationships, find talent and assist with sales and marketing. Esposito has served as CEO, High West Distillery; President, Stoli Group USA; CEO, Bacardi North America; President and CEO of Schieffelin & Somerset and Moët Hennessy USA; and as President of Premier Beverage of Florida.



Summer Preparation

BY LEN PANAGGIO

The month May for all of us, whether in the city or on the coast, presents unique opportunities. From graduations, to Mother's Day, to Memorial Day, it's a big month that traditionally kicks off the busy summer season.

Staffing up on the coast is a perennial problem, and one that seems to be growing, especially on the culinary side. Being in the city, with access to Johnson & Wales students lightens the problem a bit. Nevertheless, employee hiring plagues us all.

Once hired, are staff trained properly in your procedures? Are they all in compliance with state mandates? Unlike many pieces of damaging legislation that are always being dumped on us, mandated programs that teach responsible service of alcohol, sanitation procedures and food handling are logical and helpful to us as operators.

As I have written in the past, the change of seasons brings a change in your product mix. Our guests are switching from the heavier foods of winter to the lighter fare of summer. And with that comes changes in beverage programming.

Pairing wines and beers with food can be difficult, but an easy rule to remember is to match the weight of the beverage with the weight of the food. Drinking a big, oaky Chardonnay with a lightly-dressed salad will do no justice to either. It is important that we have made proper seasonal adjustments to our menus to reflect the change.

Summer beers are here, too. We all should have a few available; just be careful when you stock up. You don't want to be still sitting on them in December.

One of my favorite beverages for summer is bottled water. This



category continues to grow and most smart operators will have a still and a sparkling option to offer thirsty guests. I don't think I need to mention it, but I will: water is a profit center and a cost cutter. Not only can you make money selling it, but what's coming out of the tap is costing you money, and that water is usually subject to a sewer assessment. Encouraging your staff to sell water is the right and smart thing to do! As an aside, we should be using glass bottles when possible and dispose of them properly, both glass

and plastic, as it, too, is the right thing to do.

Also on the horizon is the growth of many non-alcoholic beverages, especially beer. Consumers are aware that alcohol dehydrates them, so choosing an N.A. beer is becoming more fashionable. Now, many producers are making low-alcohol beers, perfect for summer day drinks. Alcohol-free wine exists, but really hasn't caught on for a variety of reasons.

There is a lot to do while preparing for summer's arrival. We all know it is coming, and we all need to start preparing as soon as possible. There is a lot to think about; our restaurant scene is so vibrant, a true testimony to all the creativity that our state enjoys. It's not like it was many years ago; our guests expect us to be on top of food and beverage trends, have a trained staff and dine in a safe, clean environment. I don't think they are asking too much.



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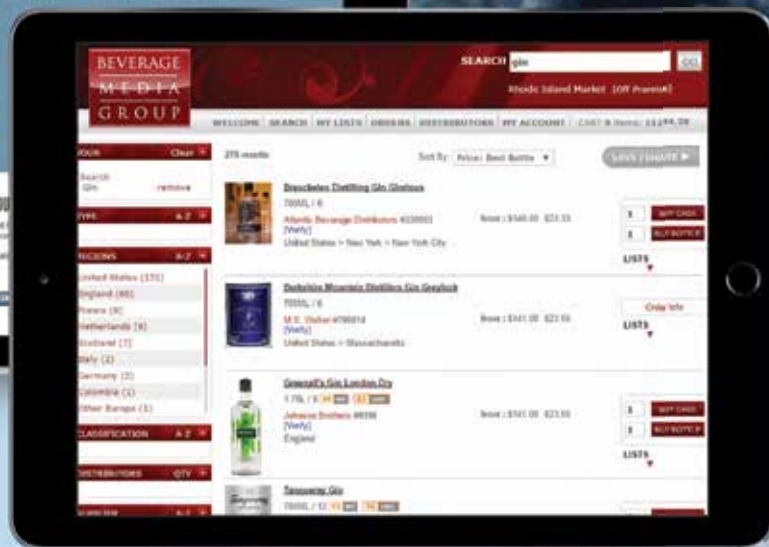
ABOUT LEN PANAGGIO

BEVERAGE CONSULTANT

Len Panaggio's career in food and wine spans more than three decades as an owner and as a beverage director at some of the top restaurants in Rhode Island. Currently a hospitality consultant, Len is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and has attended the Culinary Institute of America Master Sommelier program and the Sterling School of Service and Hospitality.

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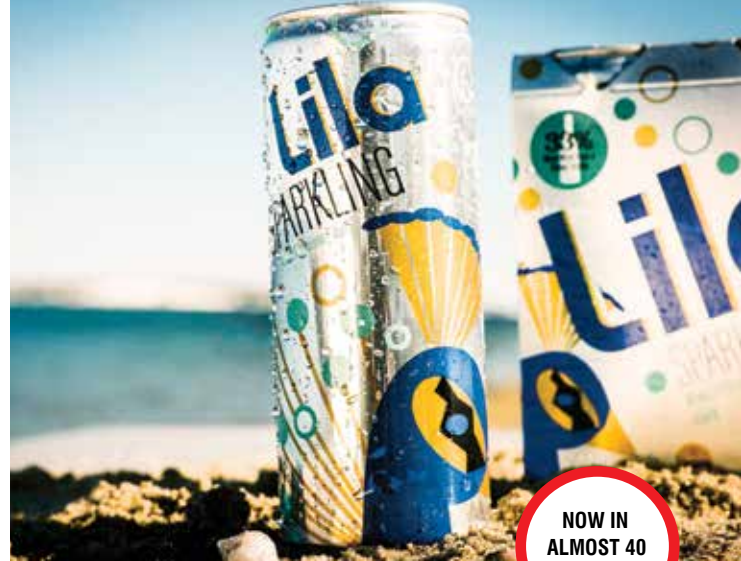


BOISSET'S 'HAUTE COUTURE' UNITES FINE WINE, HIGH FASHION

Haute Couture French Bubbles, the newest sparkling wine from the Boisset Collection, unites two quintessentially French worlds: fine wine and high fashion. Made using the traditional method to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay sourced throughout France, these new wines are not Champagne per se, but shoppers may be too busy admiring the package to care. The sparkler comes in both Blanc and Rosé versions, in 750ml (SRP \$24.99) and 187ml (\$24.99/two-pack). Commenting on the wines, proprietor Jean-Charles Boisset said, "The same level of artistry, passion and attention to detail that comes together in creating a one-of-a-kind pieces of clothing goes into crafting a bottle of Haute Couture." hautecouturebubbles.com

MAKE WAY FOR MENCIA THREE WAYS

The popularity of Tempranillo-based Rioja and Ribera del Duero is setting the stage for other Spanish varietal reds, such as Garnacha and Bobal. A trio of wines under the Pittacum label and imported by Baron Francois is promising to add Mencia to Americans' grape lexicon, demonstrating the delicious range of this flagship variety of the Bierzo region. Pittacum 2010 (SRP \$20) presents Mencia to the max, so to speak—with old-vine, almost inky concentration, mineral complexity and ample texture to stand up to grilled meats and more. Then there are two "Petit Pittacum" bottlings; the lightly oaked 2015 red (SRP \$13.50) is invitingly juicy and medium-bodied and the 2015 Rosé (\$14) is impressively fresh, lively and berryish. baronfrancois.com



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LILA TRIPLES DOWN ON CANS

Another sign that canned wines are headed toward a tipping point. Premium canned wine brand Lila Wines has added Sparkling to Rosé and Pinot Grigio. Plus, production was moved to Europe, closer to the source wineries. "By investing in improvements to our production process, we are able to better preserve the quality of the wine, shorten production lead-times, and keep the product at a consumer friendly price point," says Kevin Mehra, CEO of Latitude Beverage, the Boston-based company behind 90+ Cellars and other brands. Lila is sold in four-packs of 8.4oz cans; SRP is \$11.99. lilawines.com



IF YOU FIZZ IT, WILL THEY COME?

There may be nothing new under the sun, but one California winery has found a new application for an old technique, namely carbonation. **Clos du Bois "Lightly Effervescent Chardonnay"** is a fresh new take on America's favorite varietal white wine, tying flavors of apple, pear and citrus together with a hint of effervescence. The combination of simple fruit, gentle bubbles and light body make the wine especially drinkable. Should be a hit at brunches, book clubs and backyard gatherings. SRP \$12.99 closdubois.com



Volcanic Island Wines: Madeira and the Azores

BY EDWARD M. KORRY, MA, CSS, CHE, CWE

guest columnist
EDWARD M. KORRY

I have just returned from Madeira and the Azores with a group of students from Johnson & Wales University, all of whom participated in a nine day Spring Break credit course. The goals of the course included experiencing and tasting wines that really do possess a “minerally” characteristic (more so than the many regions of the world claiming to have such a taste), and to experience a rewarding, connected cultural experience, a term that didn’t exist in wine lexicon, yet has now become ubiquitous.

These volcanic islands, along with Cape Verde and the Canary Islands, are sometimes referred to as Macaronesia. They are a result of three major tectonic plate movements including the North American plate, the Eurasian and the African plates that formed these volcanic islands, including the Azores’ Pico Island that is fewer than 300,000 years old. They have formed as part of the North Atlantic deep trench and



Johnson & Wales University students in Madeira on the north coast of the island in San Vicente.

lie on the Gloria fault. It is these types of soils that give a minerally, almost salty, taste. There were other reasons to select this destination, including travelling distance given the short length of the course, the heritage sites and the cultural connection these islands have to our New England region.

The wines of Madeira were the mainstay of wine consumption in the colonies in the early years of our republic. It was discovered that the wines aged on *viajes de roda* – literally ‘return trips’ – on sea voyaging ships to the Orient and back. The barrels, or ‘pipes,’ of wine were used as ballast in holds of trading ships and returned greatly improved.

I had the privilege of tasting an 1875 Malvasia Madeira on this trip that was delicious, complex and persistent on the palate. But, there is a difference between the Madeira wines that are fortified from 18% to 22% and *vinhos licorosos* of the Azores, particularly of Pico, that attain alcohol levels of up to 21% naturally, or without the addition of brandy.

The other cultural connection is the more than two million descendants of these islands, the great majority of whom now live in New England, including Rhode Island, and who may have forgotten or never fully known this heritage. When these island wines reached their peak production in the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries, it was Pico’s production that dwarfed that of

Madeira. In fact, it is most probable that much of Pico wine was sold as Madeira wine when transported from the hub of Horta on Faial Island just a few miles from Pico to the U.S. Faial and other Azorean ports were critical victualing stations in the trade between Europe and the New World.

My students discovered on this trip how the culture and cuisines were heavily influenced by these trade routes, including the spices, and fruits now being grown, such as pineapples, chayote, bananas and, of course, grape varieties. Both the European and American hybrid varieties are grown, but so are varieties brought over by the settler populations that came from Northern Europe including Belgians, Dutch and French from Brittany amongst others.

While most wines from the islands were the stronger, indestructible ones, there is a renaissance occurring on these islands with a focus on dry white wines made from their unique varieties that are adaptations of what was originally brought from Portugal and Europe. The varieties include the *Arinto dos Açores*, the *Verdelho do Pico*, and the newly revived *Terrantez do Pico* that was most likely brought to Madeira from Pico.

The primary grape variety on Pico is the tart, citrusy, almost salty *Arinto*, while in Madeira it is the more aromatic and tropical *Verdelho*. The island of Pico at its height

GUEST COLUMN
CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

OATLEY WINES CHART PREMIUM COURSE

FAMILY'S SECOND FORAY IN WINE
SHOWCASES A MORE PREMIUM
SIDE OF AUSTRALIA

BY W. R. TISH

While it is not unusual for a winery proprietor to have stakes in other industries, for Sandy Oatley the entrepreneurial mix merits attention. The Oatley name is well known in Australia for yacht racing (having won the annual Sydney to Hobart race eight times) as well as for buying and revamping Hamilton Island, a destination resort on the Great Barrier Reef.

The Oatley name is also known for wine—two times yet. Robert Oatley, who passed away in early 2016, founded and ran Rosemount Estate from 1969 through 2001 along with his eldest son Sandy. Rosemount holds a special place in wine history—it helped put Hunter Valley on the map, and it established beyond any doubt that Aussies could put out crowdpleasing bottles at affordable prices, long before “critter wines” roamed the earth.

As for the eponymous label, the family took a five-year break from the wine business after the sale of Rosemount, choosing to re-enter at a much smaller scale while applying even higher standards. The break gave the Oatley family a chance to redefine their love affair with vineyards and to reposition a brand in Australia's fast-evolving wine industry.

“When we launched Robert Oatley Vineyards, Dad and I weren't really sure of much more than creating quality wine from our favorite Australian regions. Margaret River and McLaren Vale both

provided really distinct wines, and each vineyard was so unique,” Sandy Oatley recalls. “Bit by bit, we started to make some traction—based on quality.”

Margaret River Calling

The new venture was approached as a small wine adventure, with a “slow and steady” philosophy. The Oatleys developed a tiered portfolio to take a deeper look at each region. Margaret River holds a special place for the family and is the home of Oatley's luxury tier, The Pennant, as well as the Finisterre and the popular Signature Series. Robert Oatley already is the second largest exporter of Margaret River wines to the US. And with a recent purchase of property in the region, expect more to come from the Oatleys and Margaret River. Thanks to holdings kept since the 1990s as well as new leases and long-term relationships, the Oatleys also produce distinct wines from McLaren Vale, Yarra Valley, and Mornington Peninsula. ■



Robert Oatley's Pennant Range, Signature Series and Finisterre Range

Sandy Oatley and his late father, Robert, created Rosemount in 1969, and the family label in 2006.



TRIPLE PLAY

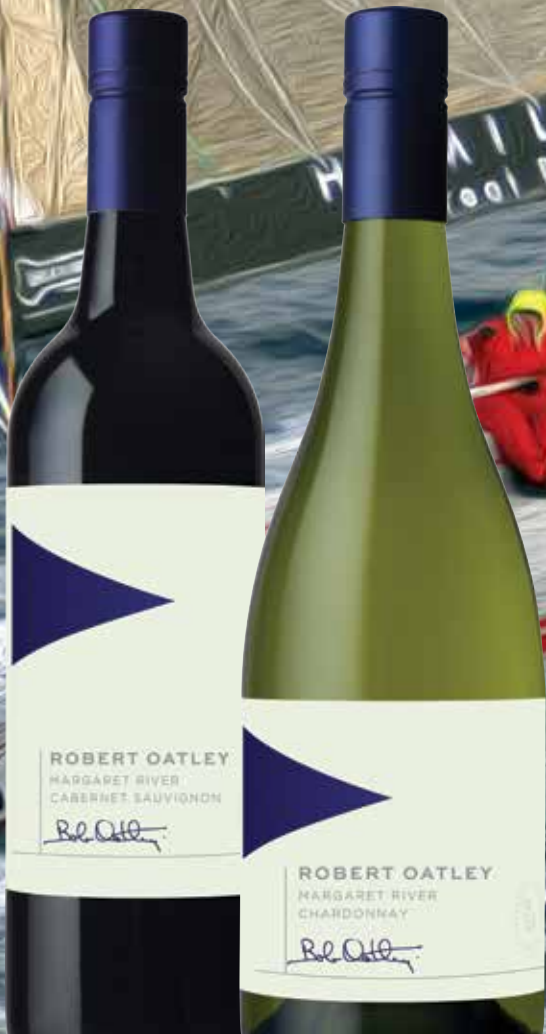
Regional identities are displayed prominently on every Robert Oatley bottle, as three tiers serve to distinguish them:

- ⦿ **The Signature Series** (SRP \$19.99) redefines value/quality and includes Margaret River Chardonnay, Margaret River Cabernet, McLaren Vale GSM, McLaren Vale Shiraz. Sandy Oatley says this tier represents “our way of saying that dad gave the wine his seal of approval... Can it pass the Bob test?”
- ⦿ **The Finisterre Range** (\$29.99 - 34.99), from the Latin *finis terrae*, meaning “end of the earth,” focuses on single-varietal and single-region wines. In the USA are Margaret River Chardonnay and Cabernet, and a Great Southern Cabernet. “These wines speak to a sense of adventure and discovery,” notes Oatley.
- ⦿ **The Pennant Range** (\$49.99 - \$59.99), a nod to yacht racing, stands at the pinnacle of the Oatley family's winemaking. In the U.S. under The Pennant label: Chardonnay and Cabernet from Margaret River. “We're sort of competitive about our sports,” he explains. “Winning the Pennant is a source of pride and a statement that we achieved something out of the ordinary, surpassing our peers.”



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ALL BEER IS BITTER AND OTHER MYTHS

BY JACK KENNY

The March column presented a few facts about canned beer that were aimed at dispelling some inaccurate beliefs, such as beer from a can tastes metallic. That's a good example of a myth, a belief acquired in one place or from one source and spread to another without the knowledge that it's partly or wholly wrong.

Myths are part of the fabric of life. No doubt your mom or grandma told you that if you went outside in winter without a hat you would catch a cold. They didn't know the science, but hey, it sounded sensible. Did you know that Charles Manson auditioned to become a member of The Monkees in 1965? That's another one. Myths are everywhere, and the internet is doing its best to keep it that way. It follows, then, that there are plenty of beer myths.

THE BRITISH SERVE THEIR BEER AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.

Real ale in English pubs is served at cellar temperature. That's where the kegs are kept. Cellars over there are cooler than ours, and the beer is usually at 50° to 55° F, which is a perfect range if you want to taste your beer.

STOUTS ARE HEAVY, AND OTHER DARK BEER NONSENSE.

How many times have you heard it? Usually said in a whine. When confronted with this claim, I offer my boilerplate response: Guinness Draught has less alcohol than a commercial lager beer, it has fewer calories, and it weighs less, so it will float on top of a lager. It's true. By "heavy" they meant to say "rich tasting," meaning that the roasted grains give it a bigger and more complex flavor.

Oh, and this one: Dark beers are stronger than lighter ones. Nope.

BEFORE LOUIS PASTEUR, ALL BEERS WERE SOUR.

Smart folks can't be faulted for believing this, because it can make sense even though it's not correct. Nobody knew what yeast was until Pasteur, in the 1850s, saw it under his microscope and figured out that it was a one-celled plant. Beer was made by saving some foam during the fermentation of one batch and introducing it to the next batch. All kinds of things could and did go wrong, including the invasion of wild yeasts. Those alone will make a beer sour.

In 1883, a Danish scientist named Emil Christian Hansen isolated a pure yeast cell and cultivated it under clean conditions to create the first batch of untainted lager yeast. After that, beer

purity roared ahead. Documents exist, however, from centuries past whose authors wrote happily about sweet beers and bitter beers. Brewers knew and remarked on the benefit of cool winter weather for preserving beer taste, because the brew soured in summer. Germany, for one, prohibited brewing in summer.

PUMPKIN ALES ARE MADE WITH PUMPKINS.

Probably some of them are, with just enough so that the brewers can sleep at night. But really ... What does pumpkin taste like? Not much. As far as I know, only squirrels eat them raw. Pumpkin beers should properly be called "pumpkin pie beers" because that's the aroma and flavor that comes through, right? Nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice, clove. And that's what you're drinking.

BUBBLES ON THE INSIDE OF THE BEER GLASS ARE A GOOD SIGN.

Bubbles on the inside of the beer glass are a sign, all right. Your glass is dirty. Google it.

ALES ARE STRONGER THAN LAGERS.

Also, ales are more expensive than lagers. One old fella told me that ales are rough, but lagers are smooth. Most of this is false. As with dark and light beers, ales and lagers can be strong or weak. The type of beer has nothing to do with alcohol level. An average consumer, noting the affordable price tag on a 30-pack of commercial lager, probably assumes that ales are for the snooty bunch who can afford them. The truth is that lager takes quite a bit longer to make than ale does, meaning that it ties up brewing equipment and ends up costing more per drop. That's why most craft brewers make ales. The beer giants make lagers to satisfy a demand that they created generations ago, and economy of scale works in their favor.

ALL BEER IS BITTER.

Here, have a Belgian tripel, or a German doppelbock.



ABOUT JACK KENNY

Jack Kenny has been writing the Beer Column for *The Beverage Journal* since 1995.



WRITE TO HIM: thebeercolumn@gmail.com

AMERICA'S OLDEST BREWERY.

SINCE 1829

Yuengling

NEW LOOK,
SAME GREAT
LAGER.



Best Beverage and Craft Beer Guild Host Collaborative Trade Tasting

Best Beverage and Craft Beer Guild Distributing of Rhode Island hosted a collaborative tasting on March 27 at Hope Artiste Village “Events on Main” in Pawtucket. The tasting featured more than 40 wine selections from Best Beverage next to craft beer, cider and spirit selections from the Craft Beer Guild Distributing portfolio. Guests spoke with brand managers and sales representatives while sampling and learning about featured selections. After the trade tasting, the two distributors invited guests and vendors upstairs for an after party at Breaktime Bowl and Bar.





1. Trade professionals gathered for the Best Beverage and Craft Beer Guild Distributing collaborative tasting at Hope Artiste Village in Pawtucket.
2. Fatima Pereira, Owner, Best Beverage.
3. Van Potts, President, Preston-Layne and Kurt Reming, New England Regional Sales Manager, Premium Port Wines, Inc.
4. Leah Winship, Best Beverage.
5. Dan Tanner of Craft Beer Guild Distributing pouring selections from Austin Eastciders.
6. Pat and Bradford Selland, Owners of Bradford Distillery.
7. Justin Keating, Sales Representative, Craft Beer Guild Distributing.
8. Cassey Nickerson, Brand Ambassador, Flag Hill Distillery.
9. Casey Wright and Chris Leach, New England Sales Manager, Doc's Draft Hard Cider and Black Dirt Distillery.
10. Brenton Mackechnie, Brewer and Distiller, Dirty Water Distillery and Stefan Cyr, Sales, Dirty Water Distillery.
11. Taylor Goodyear and Austin Gaquin, Downeast Cider House.
12. Mark Raymond, New England Regional Vice President, Carolina Wine Brands and Natalie D'Alessandro Volpe, NCV Wine Agents, LLC.
13. Paul Flynn, Evaton Imports.
14. Camilo Ceballos, Wine Director, Omni Wines.
15. Rute Goncalves, Portuguese Wine Specialist, Broadbent Selections.
16. Baxter Brewing Company's Rob Costa, Territory Sales Manager and Luke Livingston, Founder.
17. Rick Pignataro, National Sales Director, Angelini Wines.
18. Erin Marley, Woodstock Inn Brewery.
19. Jackie Duhamel and Paul Kubiski, Owner, Bootblack Brand.
20. Taylor Jacobson and Tyler Guilmette, Founder, Brewmaster Jack.
21. Heather Rogers, National Cider Sales Representative, Wolffer Estate Vineyard.
22. Richard Varano and Jonathan Porter, Hidden Cove Brewing Co.
23. Left Hand Brewing Company's David Aresty, New England Advanced Draft Specialist and Brian Sweeney, Northeast Regional Sales Manager.



More images can be seen at thebeveragejournal.com/best-bev-craft-beer-guild-dist-2017.

Horizon Beverage Offers Wine Expo at Rosecliff Mansion

Sunny skies greeted trade professionals to Horizon Beverage Company's 2017 Wine Expo at the historic Rosecliff Mansion in Newport on April 3. Invited guests sampled from the Horizon Beverage wine portfolio and met with winemakers, brand managers and sales representatives. The event included a large selection of domestic and imported wines from around the world, as well as a separate room dedicated to rosé from Horizon Beverage Wine Marketing Division, Opici Wines, Winesellers Limited and Sovereign Brands. A pianist provided musical entertainment during the trade tasting.





1. The Horizon Beverage 2017 Wine Expo was held at Rosecliff in Newport.
2. Tom Afonso, General Manager, Patriot Division, Horizon Beverage Company and Bob Swartz, President, Horizon Beverage Company of Rhode Island.
3. Marlene Torres, Senior Field Manager, Constellation Brands.
4. John Carey, Northeast Sales Manager, Duckhorn Wine Company.
5. Mandie Silver, Eastern U.S. Sales Manager, Firesteed Corporation and Brad Thomas, Southeast Regional Manager, Enotec Imports.
6. Katie Bailey, Market Sales Manager Massachusetts, Folio Fine Wine Partners.
7. Shane Lessard, CSW and Area Sales Manager New England and Partner, Folio Fine Wine Partners.
8. Claudine Lopes, Viva Vino Marketing and Jeff Gomes, Division Manager, The Wine Group.
9. Kyle Boyer, National Sales Director, Mercer Wines. Mercer was named the 2016 Washington Winery of the Year.
10. Lynda Ross pouring selections from Winesellers Ltd. in the rosé room.
11. Matt McCarthy, Area Manager, Sovereign Brands in the rosé room.
12. Sophie Daniels, Northeast Regional Manager, Opici Wines.
13. Jeff Brooks, Northeast Regional Manager, King Estate.
14. Kobrand's Scott Leverenz, Regional Manager.
15. Pamela Macrini, NY/CT Regional Manager, J. Lohr Vineyards and Wines.
16. Jonathan Spadaro, Eastern Regional Manager, Civ USA.
17. Cathy Harrison, Northeastern Regional Sales Manager, Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery.
18. Kristen Cubicciotti, Market Manager, Brown-Forman and Michael D. Smith, Director of Sales, Axios Wine.
19. Peter Yanulis, Vice President of Sales Northeast, A to Z Wineworks and Rex Hill Vineyards and Winery.
20. Olie Berlic, Eastern Region Manager, Southern Starz.
21. Arleen Carpenter, Tasting Consultant and Michael Andrews, Regional Manager, Wentz Family Estates.
22. Amanda Smith, Region Sales Manager, Terlato Wines.
23. Franck Girard, Sales Manager U.S. Northeast Region, Albert Bichot Wines.



More images can be seen at thebeveragejournal.com/horizon-2017-wine-expo.

Oceanstate Wine and Spirits Hosts Spring Portfolio Show

Oceanstate Wine and Spirits hosted its spring portfolio tasting at The Crowne Plaza Hotel at The Crossings in Warwick on April 5. The trade event featured imported and domestic wines, beers and spirits, including a table for guests to sample cocktail creations from highlighted selections. Brand managers, winery owners and representatives discussed their portfolio offerings with trade guests.





1. Hundreds of brands greeted trade guests.
2. Jared Marcus, Fine Wine Manager, Oceanstate Wine and Spirits.
3. Andrew Ventura, Sales Representative, Oceanstate Wine and Spirits and Eric Spitz, District Manager, Oceanstate Wine and Spirits.
4. Sean Frazier, Director of Sales, Oceanstate and Baystate Wine and Spirits and Rob Gillooly, Vice President, Oceanstate and Baystate Wine and Spirits.
5. Jacques Cattin, 13th generation family member of Domaine Joseph Cattin.
6. Goncalo Faria, Regional Director Americas, DGB and Pacific Highway and Jessica Brady, Senior Team Leader Northeast, Pacific Highway.
7. Brian Barry, Owner, Entitled Beer Company.
8. Neil Palladino, Tri-State Manager, Boutique Wine Collection.
9. Steve Shaw, Owner, SDS Enterprises with Kanon Organic Vodka.
10. Andrew Lix, Regional Sales Manager, Cleveland Whiskey.
11. Lindsay Cox, Regional Manager, Domaine Select.
12. Matt Falvey, Eastern Area Manager, Gonzalez Byass USA.
13. Jean-Paul Schumann, President, Mack & Schuhle.

14. Larry Soble, Sales Manager East, Sean Minor Wines.
15. Ryan Davis, Vice President Sales Eastern U.S., O'Neill Vintners and Distillers.
16. Charles Saunders, Le Grand Maitre, Chateau Montclair, Les Chevaliers Du Grand Vin and Chuck Saunders, Director of Sales Northeast, Biagio Cru Wines and Spirits.
17. Wayne Dobrutzky, State Manager CT/RI/MA, Enovation Brands.
18. Steve Curt, Sales Representative, Oceanstate Wine and Spirits mixing up cocktails during the tasting.
19. Clay Farmer, U.S. Brand Ambassador, Elena Walch.
20. Renee Fontaine, Northeast Market Manager, 3 Badge Enology.
21. Matthias Marchesani, Partner and Head of Sales, Durnberg.
22. Buck Milbrandt, Owner, Milbrandt Vineyards of Washington State.



More images can be seen at thebeveragejournal.com/oceanstate-spring-tasting-2017.



ISLE BREWERS GUILD HOSTS OFFICIAL OPENING

The Isle Brewers Guild, a newly-launched cooperative craft brewery that is now home to brewing operations for Narragansett Beer, Farmer Willie's Craft Ginger Beer, Newburyport Brewing, Devil's Purse and Sons of Liberty, held an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 10. The brewers, Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo and town and state dignitaries officially welcomed the new brewery cooperative and its mission to "deliver state-of-the-art brewing, packaging, quality control and customer service to its brewing partners." The opening of the cooperative also marks the return of the Narragansett Brewing Company's operations to Rhode Island from Massachusetts. Isle Brewers Guild was founded by Devin Kelly and Jeremy Duffy and is located at 461 Main St. in Pawtucket.

1. Nico Enriquez, Co-founder, Farmer Willie's Craft Ginger Beer; Gov. Gina Raimondo; Max Easton, Co-founder, Farmer Willie's Craft Ginger Beer; Jack Reed, RI State Senator; Mayor Donald Grebien of Pawtucket; Jeremy Duffy, Co-founder and Managing Partner, Isle Brewers Guild, having a "cheers" to the new opening of Isle Brewers Guild.
2. Farmer Willie's Craft Ginger Beer Co-founders Nico Enriquez and Max Easton.
3. During the ceremony, Mark Hellendrung, the President of Narragansett Brewing Company, addressed the crowd about the brewery's return to its home state.
4. The Narragansett Brewing Company team: Jamie Buscher, Bill Heslam, Mark Hellendrung, Joe O'Neill, Jim Crooks, BJ Mansuetti and Joe Towle.



NARRAGANSETT BREWING COMPANY LAUNCHES NEW IPA, BREWED IN HOME STATE

Narragansett Brewing Company released It's About Time IPA, the first beer produced at the new Narragansett Brewery at The Isle Brewers Guild in Pawtucket, the first Rhode-Island-brewed Narragansett beer in more than 30 years. It's About Time IPA mixes classic and complex malt character by using Pale, Caramunich and wheat malts with Cascade and Citra hops. The beer is red in color at 6% ABV, with notes of caramel, toffee, raisin and bread, and balanced with fresh floral and tropical aromas. The artwork features Providence's iconic Shepard's Clock displaying the time, 4:59 p.m., to showcase the moment "before it's acceptable to crack open a 5:00 brew." Narragansett President Mark Hellendrung said, "This beer is our way of saying 'thanks' for the unwavering support loyal 'Gansett fans have had over the years, and it represents what we're all thinking about the journey — It's About Time!"



WINE BROS. TRADE TASTING FEATURES GLOBAL SELECTIONS

The Wine Bros. of Rumford hosted a warehouse tasting showcasing Indie Wineries, along with French and Chilean wine selections, on March 9. Trade professionals were able to speak with The Wine Bros. sales team, winemakers and brand managers about the featured wines.

1. Steve Wynn, Founder of The Wine Bros., talking with Matthew MacCartney, Executive Chef, Jamestown Fish and Emily Brakenhoff of Jamestown Fish.
2. Mathilde Sauvète, Co-owner, Domaine Sauvète.
3. Vincent Caillé, Owner and Winemaker, Domaine du Fay d'Homme; Jean Barbier, Owner and Winemaker, Domaine Grand Corbiere.
4. François Descombes, Owner and Winemaker, Château La Haie.
5. The tasting was held in The Wine Bros. warehouse in Rumford, Rhode Island.



THE WINE STORE HOSTS MARCH WINE TASTING EVENTS

The Wine Store in Westerly hosted a Gnarly Head wine tasting event featuring the brand's Cabernet Sauvignon, Authentic Black, Authentic Red Blend and Pinot Noir in March. Since 2004, Gnarly Head has been creating California wines, notably known for Gnarly Head Zinfandel from the Lodi appellation, and sources from other vineyards around Northern California including Clay Station Vineyard. Also in March, The Wine Store hosted a Ménage a Trois wine tasting showcasing Ménage a Trois Silk, Ménage a Trois Red, Ménage a Trois Chardonnay and Ménage a Trois White. The tasting also featured Hopes End, an Australian Red Blend.

1. Gnarly Head wines on display during the Gnarly Head event.
2. Gnarly Head Cabernet Sauvignon, Authentic Black, Authentic Red and Pinot Noir on display.
3. The Ménage a Trois wine lineup.
4. A customer during the Ménage a Trois wine event at The Wine Store in late March.

NEW ENGLAND CRAFT BEER, WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL POURS TASTES

The inaugural, sold-out New England Craft Beer, Wine and Food festival gathered more than 40 beer, wine and food vendors to showcase their selections on March 25. The event, hosted by TV Maitre d' Joe Zito and presented by Chris Gasbarro's Fine Wine & Spirits and Chef Luciano Canova of Torre Restaurant Group, featured samples and seminars including "Spritzing Up Your Dinner Parties," and "The Future of Hop Heads," during which industry experts spoke about the trends in craft beer. The wine seminar offering discussed "Bordeaux vs. Burgundy." Guests also enjoyed celebrity chef demonstrations and live music performances as part of the event, whose proceeds were donated to the Twin River Sunshine Fund, a program that provides financial assistance to employees in need.

1. Will Boynton of Horizon Beverage Company and Marlene Torres of Constellation Brands.
2. Leo Luciano and Manny Cruz, C&C Distributors, Inc.
3. Owen Thorpe, Sales Representative, MS Walker; Jamie Matos, Sales Representative; Candace LaRose, Promotions; and Nat Saywell, Fine Wine Manager, MS Walker.
4. Micky Amphonedara of MS Walker pouring selections from Gerard Bertrand.
5. Bryan Benedict, Brand Manager, Horizon Beverage Company and Corey Bailey, Sales Representative, Horizon Beverage Company.
6. Arthur Chamberland, Market Manager New England, Pernod Ricard showcasing Kenwood Vineyards.
7. Skyla Blackinton and Nicole Faria, Diageo Promotional Team, Guinness.
8. Kyle Wierzbicki of C&C Distributors and Lauren Bush, Promotions, Yuengling.
9. Amanda Leandro, MS Walker.
10. Sally Desrosiers and Mike Moss of Shipyard Brewing Company.
11. Adam Ricci, District Manager, Fetzer Vineyards.
12. Farmer Willie's Fernando Guimaraes, RI Sales Manager and Eli Silvert, Sales.



More images can be seen at thebeveragejournal.com/ne-beer-wine-food-fest-2017-ri.



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Photos by Chris Almeida.

HEAVEN HILL DISTILLERY COCKTAIL COMPETITION YIELDS WINNER

Kai Bar in East Greenwich hosted Heaven Hill Distillery for a first-in-series cocktail competition, the Heaven Hill Triple Crown Bartending Competition, on March 29. The competition, called “The Derby,” included Jen Davis of The Eddy, Kayleigh Speck of The Grange and Durks, Stephanie Merola of The Dorrance, Corey Hayes of Fluke Wine Bar and Kitchen, Jason Kindness of Kai Bar and Matthew Simmons of Ogie’s Trailer Park. Lynn House, National Brand Educator at Heaven Hill Distillery, visited for the evening, serving as a judge, along with Christine Langford of Heaven Hill and Owen Thorpe of MS Walker. The competing bartenders created an original cocktail featuring at least one Heaven Hill product: Rittenhouse Rye, Elijah Craig, Pama Pomegranate Liqueur and Domaine Canton. Davis won the judged competition with Simmons taking the “People’s Choice” award. Round two, called “The Preakness Stakes,” was held in April and round three, “The Belmont Stakes,” is slated in May.

1. Jen Davis of The Eddy creating her cocktail. Davis won first place in the competition.
2. Stephanie Merola of The Dorrance pouring her cocktail.
3. Competitors Corey Hayes; Kayleigh Speck; Jen Davis, First Place Winner; Jason Kindness; Matt Simmons, People’s Choice Winner; and Stephanie Merola.
4. Competitors Kayleigh Speck and Jen Davis with Lynn House, National Brand Educator, Heaven Hill Distillery.
5. Mike Lester, On-Premise Manager, MS Walker; Matt Simmons, Ogie’s Trailer Park and People’s Choice Winner; Richard Fiorello, On-Premise Sales Manager, Heaven Hill.
6. Guests during “The Derby,” held at Kai Bar, the first in a series of three Heaven Hill Triple Crown Bartending Competitions.

ATLANTIC BEVERAGE DISTRIBUTORS MOVES TO CUMBERLAND LOCATION

Atlantic Beverage Distributors has located from its former office and warehouse space to 45 Industrial Road, Unit 206, in Cumberland, Rhode Island, 02864. The new location “allows the company to more efficiently service the state of Rhode Island,” said Jon Halpin, Operations Manager, Atlantic Beverage Distributors.





Photos by Laura Widness, Ruby Shoes Photography.

MS WALKER HOSTS GÉRARD BERTRAND MASTER CLASS

MS Walker hosted Rick Garced and Danielle Keating of Gérard Bertrand Wines, who led a masterclass on April 4 at Chapel Grille in Cranston. The educational tasting for the MS Walker sales team and trade guests consisted of 12 French wines including Code Rouge, Perles de Sauvignon, Chateau l’Hospitalet Grand Vin, Cigalus 2015 and 2013 vintage; Chateau La Sauvageonne Volcanic Rosé; Corbieres, Grand Terroir Tautavel, Kosmos, Chateau La Sauvageonne Grand Vin, Le Viala, and Clos d’Ora. Garced connected via FaceTime with President Gérard Bertrand, enabling a real-time discussion of the wines in detail. The renowned winegrower oversees and manages 13 vineyards in South of France, in the terroirs of the Languedoc-Roussillon.

1. Gérard Bertrand Wines on display at Chapel Grille in Cranston.
2. Rick Garced, VP National Accounts and Brand Educator, Gérard Bertrand Wines pours in preparation.
3. Nay Saywell, Fine Wine Manager, MS Walker pours.
4. Samples, tasting guide and a copy of Gérard Bertrand’s book greeted guests and the sales team.
5. Saywell and Garced at Chapel Grille in Cranston.
6. Garced connected via Facetime with President Gérard Bertrand, enabling a real-time discussion.
7. Saywell introduced Danielle Keating, Regional Sales Manager, Gérard Bertrand Wines.



More images can be seen at thebeveragejournal.com/ms-walker-gerard-bertrand.

SONS OF LIBERTY BEER & SPIRITS COMPANY RELEASES DOUBLE IPA

Sons of Liberty Beer & Spirits Company released its first canned beer, Love Handles Double IPA, during a launch party at the distillery on March 24. Love Handles Double IPA is 7.8% ABV and is sold in 16 oz. cans. The beer is a New England Style IPA with mango aromas on the nose, crafted with Equinox and Eldorado Hops and “floor malted Maris Otter to support the busty hop additions and 18% oats to create a juicy, creamy mouthfeel.”





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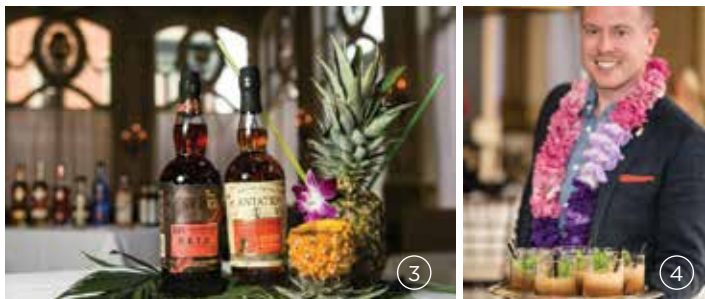
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USBG RI HOSTS PLANTATION RUM AND TIKI COCKTAIL EVENT

The United States Bartenders' Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter hosted a Plantation Rum brand education session and history on Tiki-cocktail culture led by Sean Frederick, Maison Ferrand and Boston-area bar and music industry veteran, Brother Cleve on March 13 at The Dorrance in Providence. Frederick led the group through an educational tasting of the Plantation Rum line as well as Pierre Ferrand Cognac, Citadelle Gin, Dry Curacao Orange and Mathilde Liqueur. Brother Cleve discussed "The Rise and Fall and Resurrection of Tiki," an overview of Tiki's colorful past and history, the region and the role of Plantation Rum in Tiki cocktails. Featured products from the session are distributed via MS Walker.

1. Pierre Ferrand Cognac, Citadelle Gin, Dry Curacao Orange and Mathilde Liqueur on display during the event.
2. The Plantation Rum line from Maison Ferrand.
3. History of the Tiki cocktail culture was hosted by the USBG RI on March 13 at The Dorrance.
4. Sean Frederick of Maison Ferrand with Plantation Rum cocktails.
5. Brother Cleve during the seminar.
6. Sean Frederick, Maison Ferrand; Brother Cleve; Mike Lester, MS Walker.
7. A cocktail creation.
8. Plantation Rums for tasting featured vintages from the Signature Blends and Classic Bar lines.
9. Brother Cleve with USBG RI member Shane DiBiasio.
10. Jesse Hedberg creating Tiki cocktails for the event.
11. USBG RI members Jesse Hedberg and Nick Viau.

Photos by Laura Widness, Ruby Shoes Photography.

USBG RI Chapter President Highlights Trade Guild Benefits

BY LAUREN DALEY

From educational trips to Spain and Barbados, to gatherings about the intricacies of Italian spirits or history of Tiki cocktails, the United States Bartenders' Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter offers ample opportunities for industry members to expand their professional knowledge, skills and network, while increasing camaraderie among the Ocean State's bar talent.

For the uninitiated, the United States Bartenders' Guild (USBG) is a national, nonprofit, trade organization that traces its roots back to California in 1948; Rhode Island became the 22nd chapter in 2011.

Today, the nonprofit is active in more than 50 cities around the U.S., with a mission of "Uniting the hospitality community to advance professional bartending. We believe tending and owning bars is an honorable career choice. Our goal is to empower bartenders to take charge of their careers," according to the USBG website. "We accomplish this through ... peer-to-peer learning, expert instruction, service projects, and competitions."

Through cocktail competitions, educational seminars and trips, opportunities abound, such as a partnership in the summer of 2016 between USBG and The Real McCoy Rum. The bartending competition hosted at the Ocean Cliff Resort in Newport sent two winners on an educational rum trip to Barbados. The chapter also held an Italian spirits seminar in December to discuss tasting notes, cocktail ideas and Italian culture surrounding various Italian liqueurs. A Plantation Rum Tiki-centric event in March offered expanded brand and cultural education.

The 2017-2018 leadership consists of Chapter President Jen Davis, Vice President Kayleigh Speck, Secretary Elizabeth Sawtelle and Treasurer Ben Terry. We caught up with Davis, who is also bar manager at The Eddy in Providence, to talk shop.



Q: First off, tell us a little about yourself and how you got involved in the industry.

A: I started bartending at the ripe young age of 18 here in Rhode Island and was instantly hooked. I worked in a variety of



USBG RI's Elizabeth Sawtelle, Secretary; Jen Davis, President; and Ben Terry, Treasurer at the March 2017 Plantation Rum and History of Tiki in Providence.

Photo by Laura Widness. Ruby Shoes Photography.

bars and clubs, but was drawn into the cocktail world while I was seeking out the history of my beloved profession.

Q: How did you first get involved with the USBG RI?

A: I got involved in USBG when it was first founded here in 2011. I joined because it was a great way to network and connect with other bartenders here in Rhode Island. There is a great educational component to the Guild [that] is worth the annual dues. The knowledge that you can acquire from it is priceless.

Q: Can you give examples of how it's helped your career?

A: USBG supplies you with so much information. One of the things I found valuable is all the attention they give to competitions. I was able to find out about so many and have the chance to compete. Winning a few competitions always helps build a resume ... Because of the USBG, other members and I have gotten the chance to travel to different parts of the country and globe to meet other USBG members and learn about how they do things in their part of the world. One of our board members actually just got the opportunity to go on an educational trip to Spain at the end of April to learn about sherry.

Q: Can you give general examples of how it helps others?

A: Beyond the networking and educational opportunities, you're also provided support in your craft. USBG gives you tools to succeed in both your professional and personal life by helping bartenders acquire things like health insurance and helping financially when injuries happened. I've known quite a few people who USBG has helped out when in times of need. USBG is a recognized national charity, so the charity aspect is another huge component.

Q: What are some of your seminar topics and curriculum?

A: [In March, we had] a great seminar sponsored by Plantation Rum on the history of Tiki in Providence. We also have a bitters

Mac's Liquor Mart

BY SAVANNAH MUL

Growing up, Robert Guida was surrounded by a family of business owners: both his grandfather and his father. He said he looked up to them, admired their management skills and inherited that same entrepreneurial spirit. When Guida graduated high school, he knew that he, too, wanted his own business and with advice and help from his family, purchased Mac's Liquor Mart.

"I always wanted to run a business," said Robert Guida, Owner of Mac's Liquor Mart. "It's nice to work for yourself, and I love dealing with our customers."

Mac's Liquor Mart offers special orders and works with customers for their party or celebration needs. "Even if we just order one bottle of wine for the customer, we'll go out of the way to help them in any way," said Guida, whose goal is to provide a level of service that brings return business. "It's always been about customer service."

Mac's Liquor Mart stocks approximately 5,000 SKUs of beer, wine and liquor



Lauren Guida, Employee; Michelle Sousa, Store Manager, and Robert Guida, Owner.



LOCATION

200 PLEASANT VIEW AVE.,
UNIT 2
SMITHFIELD, RI

FACTS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,500
YEARS IN OPERATION: 34

products. "We have a very strong wine clientele," said Guida. Store Manager Michelle Sousa and Store Employee Lauren Guida, Robert's daughter, both said the store mirrors national trends of increased sales of brown spirits, rosé wines and craft beers, all popular purchases at Mac's. "People don't mind spending more money on better beer," Lauren Guida said. "Champagne is also becoming more popular."

Sousa, who has been working at Mac's Liquor Mart for 17 years, said "Everything is always about flavor ... There's always new [brands] that come out and you have to try the products. There is always excitement that comes with new products."

Sousa explained that the "best and only" way to successfully recommend products is to taste new releases and learn the flavor profiles associated with each. Sousa said in addition to tasting products, it is also important to know product packaging.

"Customers will come in and ask for a wine with a duck on it, and we will find it for them. We have to be familiar with a lot of different products," she said.

Low shelves give store employees the chance to observe how the customer is shopping. Stocked shelves feature shelf-talkers with award or point-ratings alongside descriptions and tasting notes to help guide customers, Guida said. "If it looks like they are spending more than two-to-three minutes in an aisle, I'll go and ask if they need help," he said. "Customer service is the biggest part. We pay attention and offer good prices."

"Rob's been a great teacher and owner, he taught me how to do all of this," Sousa said. "It's like family here." Mac's Liquor Mart also extends an arm into the community through charitable wine tastings and donations to area churches and schools, among other local efforts. ■

FEATURE
YOUR STORE



If you own a small, medium or megastore and would like to be featured, email: dana@thebeveragejournal.com

had around 14,000 acres of vineyards carved out of basaltic rock. The vineyards are an UNESCO World Heritage Site and it's not difficult to understand why. The vines were planted in the cracks of rocks, created by men, and the vines were sustained on the fresh water rainfall that collected and sat on top of the seawater that penetrated the substrata of vineyards.

Vineyard plants numbering 2 to 6 are protected by currais, or 3-foot high walls made by lava rocks, that if juxtapositioned end to end would circumnavigate the globe twice. And these were built in the 15th to 17th centuries! The impact of American imports of powdery mildew and the phylloxera pest caused an implosion so that only 25,000 liters were being produced from the late 19th century on.

Today, there are nearly 2,000 acres that have been reclaimed on Pico, and while there is plenty of dry to sweet Lajido oxidized style of wine, it is the Arinto, Verdelho and Terrantez that is the focus. While the coop dominates production, it is the likes of the Azorean Wine Company, Curral Atlantis, Burraca and Czar that are leading the new wine revolution.

In Madeira, one encounters more dry, unfortified white wines with the DO Madeirense appellation, but it's the fortified wines that can be so extraordinary. While fortified wines have lost some of their luster for a number of reasons, there is good reason to try a dry style Sercial 5- or 10-year-old with sushi or other lighter food accompaniments, or a softer, fragrant Verdelho with richer foods including

pates, or a richer, sweeter Bual or Malmsey with a dark chocolate mousse or a dried fruit cake.

The point is that returning to one's heritage because one's family was originally from these Atlantic Islands, or because it connects to what our forefathers enjoyed, is one of the most authentic experiences one can have.

ABOUT

Ed Korry is an Associate Professor and Department Chairman of Beverage & Dining Service at Johnson & Wales University, Providence. He is also serving as President of the SWE and has attained both its CWE and CSS certifications, and holds a WSET certification. Johnson & Wales University offers courses to assist in certification exam preparation.

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the find

CÎROC ZOOMS IN ON SUMMER

Sean “Diddy” Combs proudly unveiled **Summer Colada**, the newest addition to the Cîroc portfolio. A first for this brand, Summer Colada will be available for a limited time only. The new flavor is made with Cîroc Vodka infused with coconut, pineapple and other natural flavors. The all-white bottle with a gold orb exudes a feeling of summer luxury. Summer Colada can be enjoyed on the rocks or with fruit juices such as pineapple or passion fruit for simple but delicious cocktails. To support the launch, a new campaign is running from April through June, featuring “Escape (The Piña Colada Song)” performed by British-American singer-songwriter Rupert Holmes. SRP \$34.99; 70 proof.



J. RIEGER & CO. BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Founded in 1887 in Kansas City’s livestock district, Jacob Rieger & Company once produced over 100 alcoholic products but was forced to close by Prohibition. In 2014, the brand was relaunched. The product line includes Kansas City Whiskey, which actually includes a small dose of actual Sherry, and now the distiller is reviving an old label and taking the Sherry-whiskey connection in a new direction.

The first limited-edition Monogram Whiskey—2017 Oloroso Bota—is a blend of 11-year rye and 9-year corn whiskey, finished for 18 months in century-old Oloroso Sherry barrels supplied by Williams & Humbert. Having been part of a century-old solera system, the Oloroso character imparted by the casks is both intense and unique. Sherry expert Steve Olson, a partner in J. Rieger & Co., worked on all the “sacas” or transfer-and-removals of the whiskey to create the 2017 Monogram. 1,000 bottles available nationally through Winebow; SRP \$99.99, 104 proof. jriegerco.com



Black Death Vodka traces its origins back to 1906, in Iceland, where Valgeir T. Sigurðsson made “moonshine” that became a favorite of visiting sailors.

BLACK DEATH — BACK FROM THE DEAD!

Quite unlike its namesake plague, the return of Black Death to the market is being cheered, beginning in NY and NJ and next the West Coast. Launched globally in 1987, by 1995 Black Death Vodka (made from French beets) was selling more than 120 million bottles and cans in over 60 countries and had become a particular favorite of rock music’s elite. Attacked by the then Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Black Death Vodka went underground in the late 1990s. “Now is the right time for Black Death to return,” offers Bob Miller, Chief Commercial Officer for Black Death Drinks. “We have been copied hundreds of times as other brands try to capitalize on our image.” SRP \$19.99; 80 proof. blackdeathdrinks.com

GALLIANO CELEBRATES APERITIVO HOUR WITH U.S. LAUNCH OF L’APERITIVO

Galliano—best known for Galliano L’Autentico, the herbal golden liqueur in its tall, slender bottle—has released a red L’Aperitivo expression. A well-balanced Italian bitter with fresh Mediterranean notes and mild sweetness, Galliano L’Aperitivo is made using 50 ingredients including herbs and citrus such as orange, bergamot, chinotto, tangerine and grapefruit. More than three-quarters of the ingredients are sourced from the sunny, botanical-rich Alpine region of Northwest Italy. SRP \$16.99/375ml; 48 proof. lucasbols.com

NEGRONI

1 part Galliano L’Aperitivo
1 part Sweet Vermouth
1 part Damrak Gin

Pour into glass over ice and stir. Garnish with orange peel.



FREEDOM OF SPEECH HAS A COST



BY DALE J. VENTURINI, PRESIDENT & CEO, RI HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

I've written extensively about the hospitality industry's ongoing fight with an organized movement from out of state ... we are outnumbered and being outspent in this highly-divisive battle. While these groups go by many names depending on what part of the country you're in, their core agenda is the same – raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour, eliminate the federal tip credit to bring tipped employees up to existing minimum wage, and force employers to provide mandatory paid sick leave.

In Rhode Island, we've seen a host of legislation bandied about in the state house. Our membership has and will continue to testify strongly against it. While we've always played by the rules, chosen our words carefully, and have never personally attacked the opposition, we have not been as fortunate in return.

It seems that every time a hospitality owner voices an opinion against the opposition's point of view in traditional or social media, he or she is systematically attacked. We've had members be accused of racism, sexism, and worse. The opposition uses social media and non-traditional media platforms to blast personal attacks against anyone who opposes their agenda. Free speech is really only free when the message aligns with what the opposition says. If not, the gloves come off.

Sitting in recent legislative hearings in Rhode Island's House Labor Committee,

we heard the opposition testify that restaurateurs are thieves, only care about themselves and money, and essentially vilify them. I find it so hard to understand how on one hand our hospitality industry is lauded for its excellence and used as an economic driver and tourism stimulator, and on the other, accused of the worst types of behavior against employees.

We watched one of the bill's sponsors walk the opposition into the hearing room, filling it with those in favor of his legislation, while our members were removed and turned away to overflow rooms in different parts of the state house. As we sat watching the hearings on televisions, we saw members of the opposition come down to take photos of our members, lurk in the back of our area and generally hang around in the hopes of intimidating our group.

Again, when did free speech become not free? Why is the hospitality industry vilified and viewed with such disdain? Our members by and large are the mom and pop shops ... restaurateurs who do their best to make a living from small margins, to take care of their employees, who they view as family, and to continue creating jobs and strengthening the economy.

I watched as one of our members was attacked for driving a nice car. The opposition

apparently doesn't believe he deserves to. This man put himself through college by being a fry cook at Kentucky Fried Chicken. He started off with a part-time job and through very hard work, he was able to move up in the restaurant industry. Now, he is a part owner of a multi-state restaurant company. He still works six days a week and his work ethic has not changed as the decades have passed and as his success has grown. Does he not deserve to drive a nice car or go on vacation? Does he not deserve to own a home? His company employs thousands of people with good jobs. Thousands of people who likely started off with more than him when he began this journey in our industry 30 years ago.

Why does the opposition feel that tipped employees, who already make well above minimum wage on average, should be entitled to make even more money? Why should everyone simply benefit without putting in the time or work?

America is a democracy with a free economy. The harder we work and the more we want success, the better the opportunities that come to us.



LEARN MORE

To learn how you can help keep our industry strong and able to employ more than 70,000 folks in the state, please visit www.restaurant.org



ABOUT DALE J. VENTURINI PRESIDENT & CEO, RI HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

A veteran of more than 25 years in the hospitality industry, Venturini is considered by many to be the voice of the industry in the state of Rhode Island. She has been instrumental in improving the industry's educational and training programs in the state, as well as enhancing the bottom line of the business she represents. Venturini splits her time between the office and the State House, a constant presence for her membership.

SERVING UP

BRIX RESTAURANT

909 EAST MAIN ROAD, RT. 138
MIDDLETOWN, RI

Brix Restaurant at Newport Vineyards offers farm-to-table cuisine, large and small plates for sharing and charcuterie boards featuring local cheeses. Newport Vineyard wine flights, by the glass or bottle, local draft beer selections and unique cocktails accompany the fare.



Bar Manager Caroline Robertson.



BAR MANAGER

Caroline Robertson

COCKTAIL

New Fashioned 2.0

RECIPE

- » 1/8 ounce of Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur
- » Two orange slices
- » Two Luxardo maraschino cherries
- » 2 dashes of orange bitters
- » 1/2 ounce of Newport Vineyards Port
- » 2 ounces of Bulleit Bourbon

Muddle two Luxardo Maraschino cherries and two orange slices in a rocks glass. Add 1/8 ounce of Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur, two dashes of orange bitters, 1/2 ounce of Newport Vineyards Port and two ounces of Bulleit Bourbon. Stir in glass.

“My goal was to put a modern vineyard twist on a super-classic cocktail,” said Bar Manager Caroline Robertson. “It is the perfect pairing for a dinner at Brix Restaurant overlooking the vines, or to bring a little ‘fancy’ to a night in with friends.”

LOCAL CHATTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

class in the works, as well as a tour of local Providence area breweries. We also are currently in the works to form study groups and set up a scholarship program for the Cicerone [beer] and sommelier exams. We try to make sure that all beverages are covered and represented.

Q: For employers, what are the benefits of getting their staff involved in the USBG?

A: Having a well-informed staff is something every owner wants. USBG also gets bartenders involved in the community, which helps promote your place of business.

Q: Are you planning any educational trips?

A: The next one coming up is the USBG NE summit [in April]. Guilds from all over the Northeast will be getting

together in Portland, Maine to talk about the industry and attended great seminars...

Q: What are your long-term goals for the chapter as president?

A: I want the USBG RI to be a tool that bartenders here in Rhode Island can rely on in the future for every step of their careers.

Q: What would you like readers who aren't members, or maybe hadn't heard of the USBG RI until now, to know?

A: If you are looking to get into bartending, or looking to connect with other people in the industry, it is a great network of well-informed people. ■

Interview has been condensed and edited.

Learn more about USBG RI at www.drinkwellri.com.



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Jonathan Lipsmeyer



THE HAND-OFF

**IN TODAY'S COMPETITIVE MARKET,
HAND-SELLING GIVES SAVVY MERCHANTS AN EDGE**

BY ZACHARY SUSSMAN

As anyone who has worked the retail floor knows all too well, the world of wine may be endlessly vast and complex, but there are ultimately just two categories that matter: the wines that sell and those that don't.

We're all familiar with the first category, those easy, customer-friendly bottles that fly off the shelf without fail. I'm talking about the big brands and familiar varieties which at various times could be critter wines, cult Napa Cabs, Sancerres, Malbecs or Moscatos. Far from the most exciting items on the shelf, these mainstream staples nevertheless account for the overwhelming majority of sales.

The second category is comprised of the exact opposite: those fascinating, delicious, but perpetually neglected bottles that require all of one's effort to push out the door. Maybe they suffer from some sort of stigma (see: Riesling, Sherry), or come from little-known regions with legions of unpronounceable native grapes (think Xinomavro, Assyrtiko, Bläufrankisch). Despite all the excitement they tend to inspire among "geeky" industry professionals, to the average consumer they might as well not exist.

There's a specific term in the industry lexicon for these pariahs: "hand sells." It might not be the easiest way to make a buck, but "hand selling" still remains a timeless aspect of the merchant-customer relationship. And at a time when consumer curiosity has reached a fever pitch, the art of the "hand sell" has become more important than ever.

Long gone are the days when you could study the Parker scores, print out few shelf talkers, and stock up on the same familiar mix of crowd-pleasers. With such a dizzying range of options now flooding the market, the need to define one's selection has never been more critical. Within this quickly evolving landscape,

“THIS IS WHERE ‘HAND SELLING’ COMES IN. IT’S ABOUT SHOWING THE CUSTOMER SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAT REFLECTS YOUR STORE AND WHAT YOU FIND INTERESTING.”

— CRAIG PERMAN, PERMAN WINE SELECTIONS, CHICAGO

the single biggest factor that separates a world-class merchant from the common heap of big-box warehouses and corner liquor stores is the element of curation.

In the same way that sommeliers craft unique beverage programs to express the concept of a restaurant, today’s most influential retailers intentionally tailor their selections with a specific point-of-view in mind. To that end, under-the-radar wines provide a vehicle for establishing a shop’s identity and differentiating it from its peers. “If I put out a wine that’s just

STYLISH RIESLING

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT:

One of the world’s noblest varieties, Riesling has long suffered from a stigma of sweetness, dating back to the days of cheap, mass-produced wines like Liebfraumilch and Blue Nun. Today, the grape offers some of the most versatile and food-friendly wines (both dry and sweet) on the planet—if customers would only open their minds to its many charms.

HOW TO SELL IT:

- Tasting is believing. In-store events provide a guaranteed way of demonstrating the range of Riesling styles—from bone-dry to unctuously sweet.
- For sweeter examples, providing context is key. Focus on food pairings, particularly Asian and other spicy cuisines.

okay, because I can make some money on it, then I run the risk of becoming like every other retailer,” explains Craig Perman, owner of Perman Wine Selections in Chicago. “This is where ‘hand selling’ comes in. It’s about showing the customer something different that reflects your store and what you find interesting.”

LEAP OF FAITH

The challenge, of course, is convincing the customer to take a leap of faith. According to Jonathan Lipsmeyer, the German and French buyer for Manhattan retailer Winfield Flynn Wine and Spirits, it can be extremely difficult to break people out of their fixed buying patterns. “When people enter the shop, I find that they have a specific ‘wine word’ in their head,” says Lipsmeyer. “That word could be a specific variety or a category, but they show up with a general idea in mind of what they want.”

With that in mind, the goal of the hand-sell should never be imposing one’s own taste upon the consumer. It serves no purpose to foist a skin-fermented Rkatsiteli from the Republic of Georgia upon someone asking for Cloudy Bay. “The most important aspect is just reading the customer,” explains Daniel Posner of Grapes the Wine Company in White Plains, NY. “We’re always going to take our cues from the customer, and work our way from there.”

To Jonathan Lipsmeyer, the best approach ultimately satisfies at least one of two different criteria: offering better value or better culinary pairings. “I’m either trying to save you money or to save your dinner,” he says.

Craig Perman



RED/WHITE PORTUGAL

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT:

Few nations rival Portugal for delivering high-quality wines at extremely affordable prices. With over 250 native grape varieties, however, the terrain is notoriously difficult to navigate, and most customers have no idea that there’s a whole world to explore beyond Port.

HOW TO SELL IT:

- Focus on value. One of the most successful lateral moves is to steer Cabernet fans to dry reds from the Douro. Earthy and delicious, they’re made from the same grapes as Port, and offer the kind of big, ripe fruit that Napa drinkers crave in far more affordable form.
- For a great alternative to Malbec from Argentina, often in the same \$10-12 range, look to the juicy, barbecue-friendly reds from Alentejo.
- As a substitute for ubiquitous Sauvignon Blanc, the Vinho Verde region now offers a new wave of high-quality, non-effervescent, boutique wines that combine crispness, freshness, and succulent fruit.

OBSCURE VARIETIES

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

American consumers tend to think about wine in terms of a limited handful of “international” grapes. Obscure indigenous varieties not only expand a customer’s horizons, but allow your staff to showcase its passion and education.

HOW TO SELL IT:

- Some exciting off-the-radar varieties now come from Greece. With its rich mineral core and concentrated citrus notes, Assyrtiko (from the island Santorini) is an immediate crowd-pleaser, the perfect Mediterranean white. Xinomavro, native to the Macedonian region of Naoussa, has gained acclaim for rivaling the top wines of Piedmont.
- As a Pinot Noir alternative, steer customers toward lighter-bodied red grapes from Austria, such as Zweigelt and Blaufränkisch.

PRICE BARRIER

To be sure, it’s one thing to seal the deal with a \$16 bottle of Beaujolais. Where the “hand-sell” overlaps with the “upsell,” however, the task becomes exponentially more difficult. According to Christy Frank, formerly of Frankly Wines in Manhattan, there is a specific threshold above which customers are

DARKER ROSÉ

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Once the quintessential hand-sell, the rosé category is now booming. But its newfound fame extends only the classically pale style embodied by Provence. Plusher, darker-hued rosés (such as Tavel) can often be even friendlier with food, but consumers still mistakenly interpret their deep color as a sign of sweetness.

HOW TO SELL IT:

- Rosé can be just as varied as white or red. Just as you’d never compare Pinot Noir to Cabernet, there is a whole pink spectrum to taste. Your key selling point: “Don’t treat this bottle like a rosé, but like a light red.”
- More structured and deeply-flavored than their Provencal peers, but still bone-dry, rosé wines from the Rhône, Spain, and Southern Italy are ideal hand-sells for the summer grilling season.

THE HAND-OFF

Christy Frank



unwilling to tolerate risk. “Below \$20, most people are willing to take a chance, and won’t be devastated if they don’t like what I sell them,” she says. “At higher price points—generally above \$30—I’m extremely careful to make sure they’ll be happy before I send them off with something too unusual.”

It requires effort, and the inherent risks are obvious. But at the end of the day, passion for wine is infectious. For every customer that goes home bewildered by the contents of his or her glass, countless others can be delighted, better-educated, and eager to return. This is precisely why the hand sell remains such a powerful advantage. Even at a time when you can purchase virtually anything you want at the click of a mouse, there’s still no substitute for the kind of attentive, engaged dialogue that has taken place between merchant and customer for generations.



“The conversations we’re able to have is why people keep coming back to us,” Craig Perman says. “That old-fashioned give and take, it’s how you build trust.” ■

SATELLITE ZONES

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Customers can’t always afford the finest crus from Burgundy and Piedmont. But the lesser-known “satellite” zones immediately surrounding the world’s most renowned areas of production approximate the qualities of their more celebrated neighbors.

HOW TO SELL IT:

- Direct Barolo and Barbaresco drinkers to “Alto-Piemonte,” located just a little higher up in the foothills of the Alps. Areas like Gattinara, Ghemme, and Carema put their own unique stamp on Nebbiolo at a fraction of the price.
- Instead of pricy appellations like Saint-Emilion, the wines from the outer boroughs of Bordeaux’s right bank are wildly underpriced: think Fronsac and Côtes de Castillon.
- Just south of Burgundy’s famed Côte d’Or, plenty of values are to be found in the cheaper real-estate of the Macon and Côte Chalonnaise.



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THE MARQUES OF LUXURY



PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Pernod Ricard USA's James Slack, Senior VP,
Wines & Champagnes and Julien Hemard,
Chief Commercial Officer, Spirits,



EYES ON / THE PRIZE

WITH SUCCESS IN THE U.S. AS TOP PRIORITY, GLOBAL GIANT PERNOD RICARD STEPS UP THEIR GAME

/// BY KRISTEN BIELER

A company doesn't become the second largest wine and spirits supplier in the world by sitting still. The Pernod Ricard success story—which dates back to 1805—is one of continuous evolution and adaptation, and a keen understanding that what worked a decade ago may no longer be relevant today.

And it's a story still being written.

“We’ve been given a clear mandate by Alexandre Ricard [Chairman & CEO] and Paul Duffy [Chairman & CEO, Pernod Ricard North America], that winning in the U.S. market is the top priority for the global company, so we’ve made many significant changes in order to make this happen,” says Julien Hemard, Chief Commercial Officer, Spirits.

While Pernod Ricard USA's organizational changes—new leadership, a decentralized power structure and retooled route to market—are significant, it's the shift in mind-set which may be more remarkable: “We have gone from brand-centricity to consumer-centricity, which



has altered the way we market and think about our brands,” says Hemard. “We’re moving away from categories and thinking in terms of occasion, which is how today’s consumer enjoys our products.”

Hemard himself is part of that change, having been on the job less than one year—though he’s worked at the company for over 22 years. “When I joined Pernod Ricard, our business outside of France was miniscule; and contrary to our size today, I think we’ll always be that humble little company.” Bringing fresh perspective, Hemard is tasked with navigating “the most fascinating, exhilarating spirits market in the world,” he describes. “Most trends we see internationally—premiumization and innovation—began in the U.S.”

REDIRECTING POWER

“We’ve moved from a one-size-fits-all approach primarily driven by the center, to a much more localized approach,” says Hemard. The company has simplified its structure and reduced layers, handing power directly to those in the field. With 50 new in-market employees and over 150 local activation specialists, decisions are tailored to very specific geographic regions. “The primary goal of the model is to encourage local people to make the right choices for their market,” he describes. The company hopes to build upon its entrepreneurship-style culture: “We want to empower our

people and encourage risk-taking. In my 22 years with the company, the best ideas have always come from people in the field.”

MARTELL ‘VS’ SINGLE DISTILLERY

Capitalizing on the explosive growth in Cognac, the 300-year old Martell brand—which grew over

18% last year—has released Martell “VS” Single

Distillery, made from a single distillation source and offering a richer flavor expression.



REFOCUSING ON WINE & CHAMPAGNE

A number of large spirits suppliers have recently exited the wine space, but Pernod Ricard is doubling down. “The U.S. is the world’s number one wine market and is forecasted to grow nearly 5% in volume and 11% in value by 2020, so we see tremendous opportunity,” says James Slack, Senior VP, Wines & Champagnes. He’s a firm believer in the synergies between wine and spirits: “Marrying our wine and Champagne portfolios with our spirits portfolio makes us much stronger in the marketplace because we can provide solutions for every occasion.”



ABSOLUT: TIME FOR LIME

The launch of Absolut Lime this spring, at a time when the flavored vodka category is over-crowded and softening, may seem curious. “We looked at the complexity of the category and how confused retailers and customers were with the overwhelming amount of entries, and decided that the market was ready for something simple,” explains Hemard.

After de-emphasizing some Absolut flavors to focus on the core range, the company unveiled Absolut Lime with a blow-out sponsorship of the Grammys. “Consumers love the product and its taste, and we’re already seeing strong consumption trends from Nielsen,” reports **Pierre Berard**, SVP, Spirits Marketing. “The strong support of national chains and great retail displays across the country have been wonderful to see. Lime is a highly trending flavor from the iconic, leading imported vodka.” Also gaining nice traction this year is Absolut Elyx, the luxury vodka made from single-estate winter wheat and matured in a vintage 1921 copper still. According to Elyx CEO **Jonas Tahlin**, a key success factor has been the brand’s commitment to bring safe water to 100,000 people in developing countries via a partnership with “Water for People”.



/// JAMESON CASKMATES ///

One of the key growth drivers for the company, Jameson has posted double-digit increases in 49 states for the last five years. Following the success of Jameson Black Barrel—Jameson whiskey aged in extra-charred barrels—the company released Caskmates last year. Pushing category boundaries, Caskmates is whiskey finished in craft beer barrels, which makes it relevant to beer drinkers as well as single malt fans who have long sought out experimental “finishes” on their whiskeys. “We’ve seen it become a huge success so quickly because it adds terrific versatility and more opportunities for consumers to enjoy Jameson,” says Hemard.



Slack wants to reorient the dialogue between brand and consumer to focus on occasion, not category: “People may start off with a cocktail, move to a glass of Champagne, have a glass of wine with dinner and end with whisky on the rocks. It’s unrealistic to think that someone will only drink one category or brand all the time.”

REWIRING INNOVATION

Particularly in the U.S. market, innovation is a critical growth driver. To be better positioned for success, Pernod Ricard USA created an incubation division, New Brand Ventures—headed by Senior Vice President Jeff Agdern—to handle brands young in their life cycle. “Moving these brands outside the main network allows them to get the love,



JACOB'S CREEK DOUBLE BARREL

To infuse new energy into the iconic Jacob’s Creek brand, PRUSA recently released Double Barrel, a Shiraz finished in a Scotch whisky cask and a Cabernet finished in an Irish whiskey barrel. “We believe these could be real category disruptors and almost create a new subcategory,” says Slack. “Being from Australia won’t be such a barrier for these wines, and we’re hoping to start positioning Jacob’s Creek at a higher price point to build more value.”



nurturing and patience they need to become the next big growth engine for the future, and lets them grow at their own pace,” explains Hemard.

There are currently eight brands in the division—including Smooth Ambler whiskey from West Virginia and Monkey 47 Gin. Plymouth Gin, Aberlour Single Malt Scotch, Lillet, Lot 40 Canadian Whisky, Terremoto, and, effective July 1, Power’s Irish Whiskey. “Once we see a brand taking off, we can move it into the main portfolio,” Hemard adds.



REDEFINING CRAFT

While many of the company’s smaller brands are undeniably considered “craft,” the company is aiming to broaden the definition to apply to larger brands that are made with the same artisanal approach. “We don’t believe craft is only about being small,” says Hemard. “It’s about the history, the authenticity, the people behind the brand.” Take Jameson, created in 1780 by John Jameson in Dublin, with its centuries of provenance. Or Absolut, produced in the same spot in Southern Sweden, with the same recipe and same copper still, since 1879. And Chivas Regal, which traces its roots back to 1801. “I believe in the past we neglected to talk about the actual quality, production process, history and

AVION & OLMECA ALTOS TEQUILA

Just six years ago, Pernod Ricard didn’t play in the tequila game. Today the company has premium Avion as well as the Olmeca tequila range and the focus for both: On-premise. “Our programming for Avion is to show people the difficult, time-consuming way they are producing this spirit in the distillery in Mexico,” shares Hemard. The more recent addition of Avion 44—a small batch, extra-aged anejo—is a huge success, recruiting from Cognac and single malt drinkers. “There is tremendous opportunity at the very top end of tequila,” says Hemard.

At the more accessibly priced end, Pernod Ricard developed Altos, an extension of their Olmeca range. “We assembled some well-respected mixologists and asked them what type of tequila would work best for an on-premise venue in the U.S.? The result of much experimenting and tasting was Altos and it’s been extremely successful—up 40% last year. It was created by bartenders for bartenders, so they have become our best advocates.”



/// THE GLENLIVET ///

Created in 1824, Glenlivet was among the first single malts—copied many times over. The new Founder’s Reserve—made with the signature mix of sherry and bourbon casks—is a “blend but crafted like a single malt,” describes Hemard. “It’s very smooth and accessible but still true to the brand’s style and heritage.” While the U.S. is the number one market globally for Glenlivet, there is still room to grow: “Per capita consumption of single malt is one-third here what it is in France, for example, so we still see a lot of room to grow.”



people behind these iconic brands, and we are starting to do that now,” says Hemard.

Size and craft aren't mutually exclusive when it comes to wine either, says Slack: “People forget that wine is still an agricultural product and there is tremendous craft and skill involved. Look at Jacob's Creek, founded in 1847 in Barossa Valley or Champagne Perrier-Jouet created in 1811, the estate which invented the term for 'brut.' Across our portfolio there is so much heritage and we'll be communicating that increasingly.”

“Our mission is to grow our customers' businesses, not simply grow our brands,” concludes Hemard. “Of course, we have market leaders across multiple categories (including Absolut, Jameson, Kahlúa, Malibu, Seagrams Gin and The Glenlivet), so our customers naturally want to carry those brands. But our founder, Paul Ricard, never directed his salespeople to solely focus on making quotas. He instead asked them to “make a new friend every day” by really helping our customers. That is what we are going to do in the U.S.” ■

SPARKLING EXPLODES

Americans aren't just drinking more sparkling wine these days, they're drinking it differently. “Sparkling wine is no longer being reserved for celebrations and holidays; people—particularly Millennials—are drinking it on every day occasions,” says Slack. “We are tracking how people consume—whether picking up a bottle of sparkling wine to drink casually at home, or enjoying a bottle of Champagne with a meal in place of red or white wine, or consuming it by the glass in a high-energy bar instead of a cocktail—so we can take an occasion-based marketing approach.”

Pernod Ricard USA is seeing double digit growth in their Champagnes—Perrier-Jouët and G.H. Mumm—as well as California sparkling wine, Mumm Napa. Perhaps the most explosive growth is coming from Campo Viejo Cava Brut and Brut Rosé, relatively recent entrants, up 19% last year.



CAMPO VIEJO RIOJA

“There aren't many brands as vibrant as Campo Viejo; there is tremendous energy to it,” says Slack. The Spanish brand's explosive success in the UK market—growing from 165,000 cases to 1.3 million cases in the space of six years—is beginning to repeat itself in the U.S. “Camp Viejo's Tempranillo became the go-to wine for the middle class consumer who wanted to spend the equivalent of \$10-\$15 on a terrific wine.” Operating outside of category boundaries, Campo Viejo far outperforms the still small Spanish category. “I urge everyone not to pigeonhole this as a Spanish wine—it has become a general market wine with a great taste profile that delivers on price point,” Slack says.



MONKEY 47 GIN

One of the most unique liquids to hit the market in recent memory, Monkey 47 is a gin crafted in Germany's Black Forest with 47 hand-picked botanicals. Pernod Ricard acquired a majority stake last year (the dynamic creator is still heavily involved). “Monkey 47 is the craziest, most distinct spirit,” describes Hemard. “At 94 proof, it's super smooth—I describe it as the Cognac of the gin world—perfect for sipping.”

In spite of—or perhaps because of—its small 375ml package, Monkey 47 has tremendous back-bar presence, which is where the New Brand Ventures team is promoting it. “Previously it was sold mostly off-premise, which we think



was a mistake,” he says. “Bartenders love that it is so different from other gins—I've heard top mixologists describe it as a tour de force.”

/// KENWOOD COMEBACK ///

Purchased by PRUSA two and a half years ago, Kenwood is a legendary Sonoma winery that was in need of some love. Tireless work in the vineyards and winery, along with a redesigned package and a partnership with the National Forest Foundation, have meant new recognition from trade and press—and consumers. “There are people who knew the brand 20 years ago rediscovering it, as well consumers interacting with the brand for the first time,” says Slack. “We're seeing growth across all ranges—Sonoma Series, Six Ridges and Jack London—which shows us this great brand is back on track, and it's just the beginning.”





GIN

QUIZ

Arguably no spirit has seen the highs and lows of gin, across centuries and continents. History has seen it hailed as a societal scourge as well as a miracle drug. It has been a political tool, a soldier's support, and famously "mother's ruin."

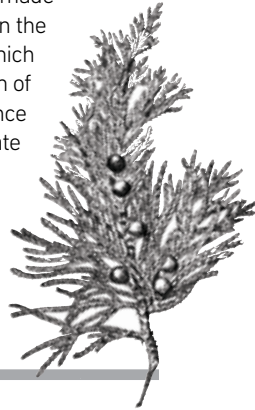
Locales with rich gin history run from Holland (where it all started) to Italy (where they, too, claim gin started) to London (epicenter of consumption, flag-bearer for gin style) to Scotland (which makes more than two-thirds of the gin in the UK) to Spain (where "Gin Tonics" have developed into a national specialty) and, naturally, to America.

Here, artisans and big brands alike are riding a current upswing in gin momentum, both off- and on-premise, and with a tilt toward the high end. Meanwhile, the gin-sipping public appears increasingly open to the particular possibilities of gin, whose styles nowadays often take juniper as a starting point rather than focus.

BACK TO
BASICS

Q. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GIN AND JENEVER?

A. Jenever (aka genever) is gin's Dutch ancestor. As the story goes, English soldiers took a liking to the Dutch spirit when they were stationed in the Low Countries—which includes what's now The Netherlands—during the Thirty Years War in the 1600s. After returning home, they wanted to try to make it themselves. They knew it had juniper in it, but that was about it. The version the Brits made ended up having way more juniper in it than the Dutch original. That's the botanical from which most of gin's flavor derives. However, much of jenever's character comes from the presence of malt wine—a malted grain-based distillate (usually barley, as well as other cereals). The malt wine gives jenever some faintly whiskey-like characteristics, versus the completely neutral flavor of gin's base spirit, all of whose flavor and aroma comes from the botanicals.



Q. WHAT ARE THE BOTANICALS THAT GO INTO GIN?

A. Distillers combine any number of herbs, roots, seeds and fruit peels to achieve their desired recipe. **The only botanical that has to be there in order for it to be defined as gin is juniper.** Some make their gin very juniper-forward; others let the juniper take a bit of a back seat to the other ingredients. The most commonly used botanicals (aside from juniper) include **coriander seeds, orange and lemon peel, angelica root, cinnamon, cardamom, licorice, lemon verbena** and **ginger**.





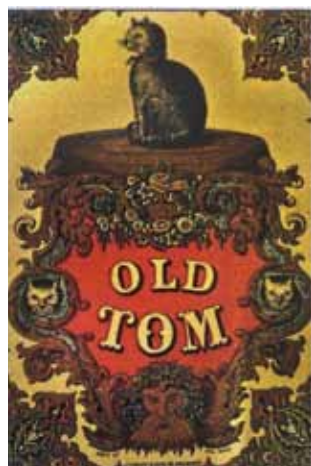
Q. HOW DID TONIC BECOME THE PREFERRED GIN PARTNER?

A. Quinine, the signature ingredient in tonic water, was found to be an effective anti-malarial agent, which was a godsend for sailors and soldiers working for the British East India Company. To make the quinine taste a bit better, they started mixing it with gin, a little bit of sugar and lime (a fruit known to help fight scurvy).

Q. WHAT IS LONDON DRY GIN?

A. London Dry Gin (often referred to simply as "London Gin") is the type with which most consumers are familiar, as most of the gin produced today falls into this category.

- By definition it must be distilled to 70% alcohol (though diluted to 40% for bottling)
- It must use only natural flavorings—all of which impart their flavor during the distillation process.
- Producers cannot add any coloring to it.
- Only a minuscule amount of sugar may be added—no more than 0.1 grams per liter of finished gin. The lack of added sweeteners is where the "dry" comes in. That distinguishes it from Old Tom Gin.



Q. WHO IS OLD TOM?

A. Trick question: there is no person named Tom. Old Tom is a sweeter style of gin that originated in the 18th century. It was the traditional ingredient in cocktails like the Tom Collins and the Gin Rickey. Many consider Old Tom to be the bridge spirit between jenever and London gin. The style more or less disappeared after the 19th century, but it has enjoyed a bit of a revival.

**BRAND FOCUS:
CAORUNN**



GIN'S IDENTITY OPPORTUNITY

Gin and juniper will forever be hitched, but the fact remains: the gin market has grown more varied than ever this century, and in the process, juniper is often found in the back seat rather than in the driver's seat. There is a tremendous upside in this shift: distillers are better able to have their gin represent true local flavor, by emphasizing local botanicals in their gin.

The Scottish gin Caorunn—the only gin produced in Speyside using natural local botanicals—is a perfect example. Caorunn (pronounced 'ka-roon') is the Gaelic word for Rowan Berry, which is one of five botanicals foraged within walking distance from the distillery

The other local botanicals, handpicked from the hills surrounding the Balmenach Distillery in the Cairngorms National Park, are dandelion, heather, bog myrtle and Coul Blush apples.

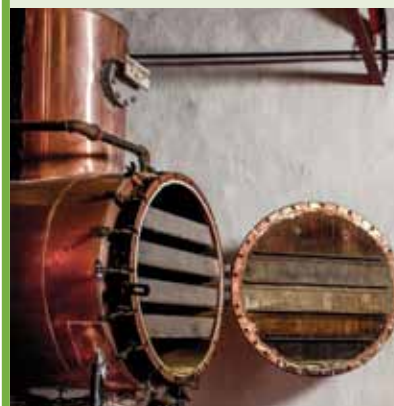
- Caorunn's taste is refreshingly different: clean and crisp, with floral, fruity notes and a long dry finish.
- Coul Blush apple, native to nearby Ross-shire, has a clean, sweet taste. This particular infusion sets the stage for a Caorunn & Tonic—uniquely served with fresh-cut red apple instead of lime.
- Bog myrtle, sometimes called sweetgale, imbues a soft, sweet resinous aroma to Carounn.
- Balancing out the five ultra-local botanicals are six traditional ones: juniper berries, coriander seed, orange peel, lemon peel, angelica root and cassia bark.



IN THE GIN-HAPPY UNITED KINGDOM, CAORUNN IS THE #4 SUPER-PREMIUM GIN (NIELSEN 2017).

'HEADY' MACHINERY

Caorunn is produced using the only working Copper Berry Chamber in the world, by just one man, Gin Master Simon Buley. The Copper Berry Chamber was made in the 1920s in the U.S. to extract essential oils to use as a base for perfumes.



It is ideal for producing gin because the copper reacts with the vapors and removes unwanted flavors. It is a traditional, slow infusion process.

The spirit vapors pass through the four botanical trays at a very slow rate, to ensure maximum uptake of the flavors and aromas of the botanicals.



Q. WHAT IS 'BATHTUB GIN'?

A. Apocryphally, it originated in the 1920s as a term applied to **amateur gin**, batched in tubs. More factually, it was not so much that tubs were used, but rather bathtub taps were used to fill jugs that did not fit in a sink. No distilling was involved; home gin-makers started with grain alcohol then added juniper berries (but not always), other ingredients and water then allowed it all to steep.



Q. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO TASTE GIN?

A. Room Temperature. Most experts recommend at room temperature, diluted with a few drops or even an equal measure of water, which helps reveal both qualities and flaws.

Q. IS ALL GIN CLEAR?

A. No. Modern Dutch genever, aka "golden gin" acquires a pale gold tint through barrel aging. And unfiltered gins appear naturally cloudy.

Q. WHAT WAS GIN LANE?

A. English artist William Hogarth is famous for his companion engravings, **Gin Lane** and **Beer Street**. The former depicted the degradation and destitution of gin drinkers at the height of the Gin Craze in 1751. Meanwhile, Beer Street depicted its namesake beverage as a drink of class and virtue. The gin of the era was fairly nasty, poorly regulated (sometimes poisonous) stuff. Within the next century, proper regulation enabled the spirit to achieve a level of respectability and some of the most iconic brands consumed today were born in the 19th century.



Q. WHERE WAS THE FIRST DISTILLERY IN THE UNITED STATES?

A. Historians place the first American distillery in Staten Island, circa 1640, and it served the new residents of "New Amsterdam" with gin, the favored drink of their homeland. The city was renamed New York in 1684.



KNOW YOUR GIN COCKTAILS? MATCH THE DRINK TO ITS INGREDIENTS (BESIDES GIN):

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1) GIMLET | A) SUGAR, LEMON, CLUB SODA, ORANGE, CHERRY |
| 2) NEGRONI | B) LEMON JUICE, HONEY SYRUP, LEMON PEEL |
| 3) TOM COLLINS | C) LIME JUICE, SIMPLE SYRUP, LIME |
| 4) BEE'S KNEES | D) VERMOUTH, OLIVE/LEMON |
| 5) MARTINI | E) RED VERMOUTH, CAMPARI, ORANGE TWIST |



ANSWERS: 1-C, 2-E, 3-A, 4-B, 5-D

Q. WHAT ARE SOME CURRENT SELLING POINTS?

A. Gin is better (and cooler) than ever!

- Gin is complex and edgy as spirits get—it makes a perfect hipster gift.
- A Gin & Tonic is perhaps the easiest classic cocktail to master (superior tonic, such as —Q or Fever Tree, is key).
- Because it is built on botanicals, which are often sourced locally, gin potentially offers a greater sense of place than any other distillate.
- In the same vein, gin—being flavored but generally not aged—is arguably more reflective of a distiller's skill than any other spirit.
- Flexibility to make gin wherever a still can be set up ensures that there are usually good local options to carry.



MIXOLOGY IN THE POST-JUNIPER ERA

Credit much of gin's recent momentum to distillers dialing back the juniper, setting the stage for other botanicals to shine. Distilled in England in traditional copper stills, Brockmans balances a unique combination of traditional gin aromas, citrus and coriander with top notes of blueberries and blackberries to provide a distinct new gin taste experience.

In turn, this modern style means more creative space for mixologists; instead of wrestling with juniper, they can play with other elements.

- In a G & T, for example, Brockmans' field-tested pairing of blueberry and pink grapefruit gives the combo a refreshing twist.
- Another adjusted classic: the Brockmans Dry Martini calls for a rinse or spray of dry vermouth before adding ice-shaken gin and a lime twist.
- And there is plenty of room for novelty—the "Brockfast Martini" uses orange marmalade, lemon juice, blackberry or blueberry syrup and Triple Sec liqueur.

TRY YOUR HAND?

Brockmans is so convinced of gin's mixability that the brand is once again sponsoring a competition ahead of World Gin Day, June 10th. Entrants are invited to submit a "Brocktail" recipe via their bar's social media. The winner and two other top finalists, based on public votes, will each win a trip for two to Tales of The Cocktail in New Orleans this July.

Pictured here: last year's winner, "Irn Bro," from the Glasgow, Scotland's Gin Bar 71. This take on the Negroni uses equal parts Brockmans Gin, Aperol and Rinquiquin. For details, visit Brockmans Facebook page.



Q. WHISKEY HAS HAD A HUGE RENAISSANCE. WHAT ABOUT GIN?

A. In the United Kingdom, gin is on fire. Between the late 1950s and 2009, there was only one producer of London dry gin still producing within London (the others moved out when demand fell and real estate was cheaper outside the city). But now there are at least ten in the capital city and nearly 300 throughout the U.K. (more than three times what it was just a few years ago). Gin Festival, a consumer tasting showcase for the spirit, launched in Leeds in 2013 and has since added nearly 20 other annual events throughout Britain.



Gin-thusiasm is starting to spill over into the U.S. market. Overall U.S. gin volume had declined for many years, but the category is turning around, with a modest volume gain of 0.7% in 2016, according to the Distilled Spirits Council (the revenue gain was a more substantial 2.3%). But the high-end and super-premium price tiers are where the real story is, enjoying volume gains of nearly 12%, respectively.

Q. WHAT IS NEW WESTERN DRY GIN?

A. In a word: **innovative**. The term New Western Dry Gin was actually coined by Aviation Gin founder Ryan Magarian in 2009 to account for the plethora of new brands, especially since the turn of the century, which de-emphasized juniper while often showcasing other botanicals. While useful to draw attention to the new wave of gins, such spirits are not so "new" anymore and tend to come from all over. So the term is not as functional as it was only a few years ago, but one might argue that the shift away from juniper as gin's driver continues apace.

Q. WHAT IS 'MOTHER'S RUIN'?

A. Gin picked up the nickname "mother's ruin" because of the litany of social problems that developed along with its cheap availability in mid-18th century England. Among the other monikers that have been applied to gin over the years...

- **MADAME GENEVA**
- **BLUE LIGHTNING**
- **CRANK(!)**
- **CUCKOLD'S COMFORT**
- **MY LADY'S EYE-WATER**
- **THE REGULAR FLARE-UP**
- **CHOLIC WATER**
- **MAKE SHIFT**
- **FORTY ROB**
- **KILL-GRIEF**
- **RED EYE**
- **DUTCH COURAGE**
- **PHLEGM CUTTER**
- **BOB**

Q. WHAT'S SLOE GIN?

A. **Infused High Proof Gin made with Sloe Berries.**

Sloe berries, which grow wild in the hedgerows of England, look like a mash-up of a blueberry and a Concord grape. But looks deceive: sloes are quite astringent and unpleasant to eat. Resourceful distillers came up with a way of infusing them in high-proof gin, extracting their essence and tempering it with a bit of sugar. The result is yet another branch of the convoluted gin tree, most famously paired with citrus and soda water to make the Sloe Gin Fizz.



BASE INGREDIENTS

As aromatized and fortified wine, vermouth draws its character both from its base wine and the infusion of herbs and other botanicals. For Lustau, the base of Amontillado and PX Sheries is key. Ransom chooses to highlight the non-grape ingredients on the front label.



VERMOUTH REBOUNDS

IS IT FINALLY VERMOUTH'S TIME? SUPPLIERS ARE RAMPING UP...

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

Bouyed by the return of many classic drinks that require the wine-based aperitif, vermouth has flourished as bartenders have incorporated Old World brands now de rigueur in many bars. Mostly on-premise focused, the growth has encouraged numerous producers.

Gallo now offers a set of niche vermouths called Lo-Fi, about to roll out in the New York market. NYC already has a crafty contender in Atsby. On the West Coast, Quady Winery's Vya has gone nationwide. And Spanish producers are especially gearing up—Sherry houses Lustau and Gonzalez Byass just introduced their own Sherry-driven vermouths, while

Spanish stand-by Oliveros has entered the U.S. with a red-wine-based brand.

Two classic vermouths—Italian Martini & Rossi and French Noilly Prat—owned by Bacardi have expanded their expressions as well. For Noilly Prat, Extra Dry, Original Dry, Rouge and Ambré are now sold in the U.S. Martini now offers, in addition to the classic Bianco and Rosso, the higher-end Gran Lusso as well as two new styles of vermouth di Torino: Riserva Speciale Ambrato and Rubino. Even German vermouth makers are seizing the opportunity; Ferdinand's Saar Vermouth, a Riesling-based, small-batch expression using local herbs, has found a U.S. importer in Preiss Imports.



STRAIGHT OR MIXED?

Numerous restaurants, including some operated by the Denver-based Sage Restaurant Group, serve vermouths on tap, and Sage is working to create a house-brand for 20+ units. Like with gin, though, volume isn't the story—value is.

“The potential is there for a large vermouth producer marketing more in the U.S.,” says Tad Seestedt of Ransom Wines & Spirits, who produces both sweet and dry vermouth. “As people are exposed, they open their minds to the idea that it's not just for cocktails. And I think the real opportunity is for people to start thinking of it as something that should be paired with food.”

Gonzalez Byass's La Copa was launched last year, from an 1896 recipe. For Lustau, too, the uncovering of an old recipe and growing interest in aperitifs convinced them timing was right, says Grupo Caballero's Myrna Santos Mayor. “The U.S. is a primary focus market, mainly because it offers an advantageous opportunity based on two solid contrasting points: first the increased demand for creativity in complex cocktails, and also the notable rise for on-the-rocks, simple low-ABV drinks,” she says. Lustau uses a base of Amontillado and PX



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Sherry, while La Copa has minimum eight-year-old Oloroso and PX plus eight herbs and spices.

COMPLEX CHARACTER

Expanding vermouth's flavor profile informed the creation of Lo-Fi, says Steven Grasse, founder of Quaker City Mercantile, which produced the recipes for Gallo. "The vermouths were specifically formulated to be complex enough to be sipped on their own but also with versatility in mind so they work well in a variety of cocktails without overpowering the flavors in other craft spirits," he says.

Ransom's Tad Seestedt, who sells about 80% of his vermouths on-premise, and others point out that the trend toward lower alcohol beverages, as aperitifs or as sessionable drinks during a night, have made vermouth more appealing. "We are seeing consumers enjoying vermouth in a more European way, just on the rocks as an aperitif. This push is mainly coming from bartenders, wait staff and sommeliers who are on the floor and can educate guests about the pleasure and flavor of vermouth on its own,"



Lo-Fi sports a contemporary look; most European vermouths lean toward traditional designs and fonts.

he says. Served with sparkling water, sparkling wine, in a long drink with mixer or just on the rocks, many smaller brands are created with mixability in mind.

"Bartenders are starting to realize that not all vermouths are alike and we now have a range that can make different styles of Manhattans, that go better with different ryes or bourbons," says Gary Gruver, Marriott Global Operations Beverage Manager.

For the Sage Group, vermouth is a big deal. "We're totally head over heels in love with vermouth," says Brandon Wise, Corporate Director of Beverage Operations. "These days we're really paying attention to every ingredient and vermouth is very important again."

Attention on the field of vermouths certainly will continue to build. Fratelli Branca is ramping up promotions for their two classic vermouths, Carpano Antica Formula and Punt e Mes, both imported by Infinium Spirits. Look soon for a vermouth from the Yarra Valley in Australia, Regal Rogue, currently in the UK and Australia and planning to launch here this fall.

Also coming to America: Pio Cesare is reviving both a Barolo Chinato and a Vermouth, last produced in 1951. The original handwritten recipe from 100+ years ago starts with un-oaked Chardonnay and Moscato which then mac-



erates in alcohol and sugar for weeks with rhubarb, coriander, cinnamon and more. "We have produced 1,000 bottles, each using exactly the same label designs as the original ones," adds fourth-generation owner and winemaker Pio Boffa. ■

WHAT IS VERMOUTH?

- Vermouth is an aromatized *and* fortified wine; it can be dry or sweet
- It starts with a base of a neutral grape wine or unfermented wine must; to this producers add alcohol and a proprietary mixture of dry ingredients—aromatic herbs, roots, barks, flowers, spices and other botanicals.
- The name "vermouth" dates to mid-17th century Europe; it is the French pronunciation of the German word *wermut*, for wormwood, which has been used as an ingredient over the beverage's history.
- Usage has ranged from medicinal purposes, as an aperitif in fashionable cafés; and as a distinctive contributor in cocktails.
- Vermouth's greatest hits, cocktail-wise, include the Martini, the Manhattan, the Rob Roy and the Negroni.
- Historically, there have been two main types of vermouth, sweet and dry, but the styles are expanding as the natural opportunity to create vermouths with distinctive proprietary character has led to a spurt of innovation in the 21st century.



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T

trend
spotting

SPIRITS ON FIRE

SPICY-HOT WHISKEY & SUCH ARE SPREADING—
BLAME/THANK FIREBALL

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

Most comets burn out fast, but the streak across the spirits sky known as Fireball shows no signs of disappearing, and the rivals for its fiery crown keep increasing.

Fireball's annual triple-digit growth slowed to double digits in 2015 but it has already far surpassed four million cases and is one of the country's top ten spirit brands now. While Fireball is a Canadian whisky-based tongue tinger, American-made brands like Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire, Evan Williams Fire, Wild Turkey American Honey Sting and Jim Beam Kentucky Fire, among others, have shown strength in the burgeoning heat spiked whiskey category. In fact, although honey-flavored whiskeys do well, the massive volume of Fireball means spiced whiskeys sell better overall than any other flavor choices.

With fiery whiskey considered to be taking share from spiced rums, perhaps the trend has even crossed categories and stimulated the launch in 2015 of Captain Morgan Cannon Blast, a blend of rum, citrus, jalapeño and chipotle pepper, targeted at that same shot occa-

sion that has done so well for Fireball and others.

Fiery spirits have been around for sometime, with chile-flavored vodkas and tequilas the best known until recently. But the sweetness that is part of the Fireball phenomenon has helped push the hybrid whiskey/cordial area towards becoming its own category.

BEYOND WHISKEY

Not only big name bourbon makers have staked their claim: relative newcomer Bird Dog has its own Hot Cinnamon Flavored Whiskey, for example, and heritage shot brands Jeremiah Weed and Yukon Jack have each introduced spicy variants. In addition, cinnamon has shown up in numerous regionally popular moonshines—notably, two Mason-jarred Tennessee-based brands, Ole Smoky Cinnamon and Sugarland Shine's Tickle's Dynamite Cinnamon.

Just recently, two new products have emerged to join the heat parade. Hellboy Hell Water Cinnamon Whiskey is rolling

out nationally, a corn whiskey brand based on the bestselling comic book and film character, Hellboy, bottled at 66.6 proof. Then there is the first release from MerryGo Spirits, HEEET Hot Cinnamon, a 68 proof vodka with a spicy flavor being touted for its cocktail bona fides as well as for shots.

How many of these cinnamony spirits will, well, catch fire? Consumers looking for flavored spirits are notoriously fickle, and the bargain bins are jammed in stores where retailers went long on flavored vodkas that never caught hold. Shelf space concerns make it even more challenging, but it's clear that entrepreneurs are getting increasingly hot for a piece of that cinnamon pie. ■



The granddaddy of heat-packing set, Fireball is now even available in a box.



STAYING HOT, HOT, HOT

LEFT: Cocktail for Wild Turkey American Honey Sting: The Stinger. RIGHT: Fireball's ongoing success has spawned a flock of new products that offer a fiery heat taste experience.



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BEER'S BIG TENT

AS CRAFT STAYS COOL BUT VOLUME GROWTH SLOWS, COMPETITION AMONG BREWERS HAS NEVER BEEN SHARPER // BY W. R. TISH

Craft beer continues to punch above its weight value-wise, but volume growth appears to be slowing—rising just 6% from 2015 to '16. “The era of 18% growth rates is probably over,” Bart Watson, the Brewers Association’s chief economist, offered recently.

That’s one reason big brewers continue to step aggressively over the craft fence. Between brand acquisition, product development, packaging updates and outside-the-box marketing efforts—and fact that brewery openings are dwarfing closings (826 to 97 in 2016)—it’s easy to see that beer’s “big tent” has never seemed so dynamic.

With overall beer volume slowing, the feeling inside that tent is craftier and more crowded than ever. This much is certain: competition for market share has never been keener and faster-evolving. Here are some recent developments to keep an eye on.

X MARKS THE SPOT

Aiming to invigorate the light beer category, Heineken USA is introducing Amstel XLight; checking in at 90 calories, 2



carbs, 4.2% ABV and 4 IBUs, it’s a sessionable beer that delivers full flavor and import pedigree. Coming from Amstel—an established leader in the light arena—XLight should have immediate impact in its test markets this spring.

(BE)CAUSE

Tying promotions in with charity is nothing new—all the more reason that contemporary projects are creative and focused. It’s also a bridge to Millennials, notes Katharine Preville, Brand Manager, Heineken: “Millennials are generous with their charitable donations, and nine in 10 would switch brands to one with a cause.” This summer, the Cities Project by Heineken is partnering with the Bruno Mars 24K Magic World Tour; consumers who donate to one of 11 locally relevant Indiegogo campaigns across the country will receive concert tickets to the tour.

In their ongoing support of those whose unconventional ideas make a positive change in their communities, Tiger Beer, Asia’s premium lager, brought “Air-Ink,” the world’s first ink created from air pollution,

to the streets of New York. Among the works scattered throughout Manhattan, Buff Monster’s mural collaboration with Tiger Beer was displayed prominently in Chelsea, on 28th Street and 7th Avenue.

In a convergence of beers, bikes and chefs, Rogue Ales has teamed up with some of Portland’s top chefs to form a cycling team that will ride more than 300 miles in May to support No Kid Hungry. Rogue Sack Lunch Ale, a 100% Oregon-grown hoppy IPA, can be spotted around Portland with its distinctive, custom bike tap handles.

MARKETING IN MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS

Jamaican lager Red Stripe is launching “Ignite Urban,” a new digital A&R platform that places emerging pop, R&B, hip-hop and reggae artists in a skill-based competition; grand prize





// CASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE //

Diversity of styles is becoming the new normal in beer. Unusual is becoming the usual, and consumers are embracing it. Consider the success of Blue Point Brewing. One of their signature brews is Cask Ale—unfiltered and unpasteurized beer which is conditioned (including secondary fermentation) and served from a cask without additional nitrogen or CO2 pressure. And the brewery in Patchogue, on Long Island, hosts the largest annual cask ale festival in the country.



is a recording contract. Grammy Award-winning singer Nelly is Ignite Urban's artist ambassador.

Humor continues to be a signature of craft offerings. Ska Brewing is upping production of their "Mexican Logger" by 20% for summer 2017. The award-winning pilsner is "light, refreshing and really hits the spot after a long day of brutal chainsaw work."

Casa Modelo's newest "cerveza preparada," Tamarindo Picante, offers a spicy yet sweet flavor profile, blending traditional chelada ingredients including beer, tomato, salt and lime with the authentic Mexican flavors of chipotle and tamarind.

Seasonals never go out of style (until they're out of season and new ones roll in). Samuel Adams continues to be a market leader in seasonals; offerings this summer include Samuel Adams Porch Rocker, inspired by German cyclists' classic Bavarian-style Radler, which is a mix of lager and German-style lemonade.

Of course, in marketing, old brands can come up with new tricks. Old Milwaukee, brewed since 1849, is releasing new cans that pay homage to America's pin-up heritage. The new American Pin-Up Series will run on all Old Milwaukee Lager, Old Milwaukee packaging and will be available at retailers, bars and restaurants



nationwide. The first entry in the series, 'Stars and Stripes,' is modeled after iconic female wartime heroes harkening back to WWII. The next round, launching September 2017, gives a nod to the hunting and outdoor traditions, with a new design to follow every four months.

It's not unusual for entire lines to get made-over. For instance, Rodenbach Brewery, known worldwide for Flemish Red Brown Sour Ales, will be incorporating a completely new design for their portfolio, anchored by the letter R.

Going digital in a completely novel way, Anheuser-Busch's Michelob Ultra brand launched ULTRA 95, a free, dedicated skill on Amazon Alexa. The ULTRA 95 Alexa skill taps into the cutting-edge



Seasonals keep inventory fresh year 'round



voice recognition aspect of Alexa to deliver 12 customized fitness workouts, each designed to burn about 95 calories (same as in a Michelob Ultra) in 10 minutes or less. ■



BEER COCKTAIL - WHY NOT?

For National Beer Day on April 7th, Peroni Nastro Azzurro chose to promote itself with a refreshing cocktail recipe.

AMARO AL FRESCO

Peroni Nastro Azzurro
1 oz Aperol
¼ oz Fernet Branca
½ oz Dry Vermouth
Orange Peel

In a cocktail shaker, combine all ingredients with ice except Peroni and shake vigorously. Fill tall glass with new ice and add Peroni gently, strain ingredients over Peroni gently and garnish with orange peel

P

new
products

1. SILK & SPICE RED BLEND

With aromas of ripe red fruit and hints of vanilla, mocha and spices, this red blend delivers a balanced taste, with very soft tannins and a long finish. Silk & Spice pays homage to the adventures of the Portuguese sailors of the 15th century, who discovered the first maritime route from Europe to the Indian Ocean. Accolades include 90 points and Best Buy from Wine Enthusiast.

\$ SRP: \$14.99
evalton.com

4. JOHNNIE WALKER 'BLENDERS' BATCH'

This limited edition marks the first reveal of Johnnie Walker's experimental program highlighting the art of blending. Aged for at least 10 years in American oak, Blenders' Batch Triple Grain American Oak focuses on the influence of bourbon and rye barrels; and it is blended using five grain and malt whiskies. The resulting Scotch is uniquely smooth, with sweet fresh fruit and gentle spice—an excellent foundation for cocktails.

\$ SRP: \$29.99
johnniewalker.com

2. POLAND SELECT WODKA

Not every vodka needs a gimmick. Poland Select Wodka is riding into market via Domaine Select Wine & Spirits, with a promise of "No fluff, no pomp, no circumstance." This vodka is clean, racy and vibrant; nuances include herbal and minty aromatics and great acidity supporting a spicy finish. This value-priced vodka hits all the notes you want for a Martini or a long drink.

\$ SRP: \$13.99/750ml | \$15.99/1L
domaineselect.com

5. KETEL ONE ARNOLD PALMER COLLECTOR'S EDITION

To honor their lifelong friendship, Ketel One Vodka released the Arnold Palmer Collector's Edition bottle—and donated \$100,000 to the Arnie's Army Charitable Foundation (AACF). Besides buying a bottle, fans can join in the charitable spirit through purchase of a limited edition shirt with all proceeds going to the AACF.

\$ SRP: \$24.99/750ml | \$31.99/1L
ketelone.com/arniesarmy/

3. NINER WINE ESTATES 2013 CHARDONNAY, EDNA VALLEY

Nestled in the northwest corner of Edna Valley, Niner Estates' Jespersen Ranch lies three miles from the Pacific Ocean. Morning fog and afternoon breezes help preserve the grapes' acidity; dry weather in 2013 brought a great, ripe, early harvest. Grapes were fermented in French oak barrels (one-third new) with full malolactic and monthly stirring of the lees, resulting in a rich, long-finishing Chardonnay. 90 points Wine Enthusiast. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

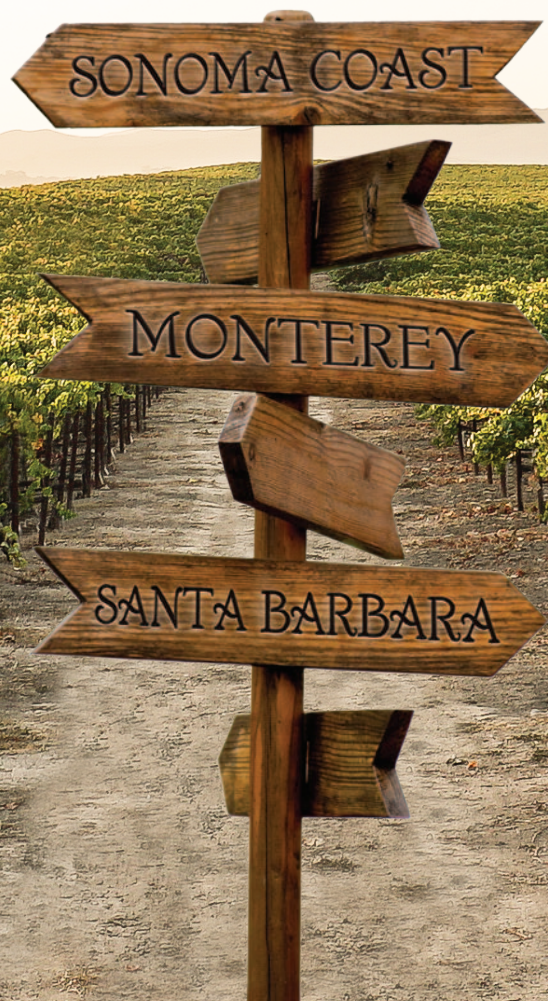
\$ SRP: \$29.99
broncowine.com

6. DFV NOBLE VINES SELECT 515 ROSÉ

Delicato Family Vineyards has added a rosé to their Noble Vines Collection. While the line's signature use of numbers usually references vine clones, Noble Vines 515 Vine Select Rosé celebrates 5:15pm—when folks are apt to unwind with wine after a long day. The 515 rosé is a traditional composition of Grenache and Syrah with a touch of aromatic white varieties, all harvested early and cool-fermented in stainless steel.

\$ SRP: \$14.99
noblevines.com

location, location, location



Introducing Cherry Pie multi-vineyard Pinot Noir. Wine with a distinct sense of place, from hand-picked vineyards in California. From gravelly, well-draining sites in Monterey, elevated vineyards on steep slopes in the Sonoma Coast, and warm, sandy soils in Santa Barbara, each cluster begins with the influence of its surroundings.

*Welcome to our neighborhood,
to our home, to the vineyards of Cherry Pie wines.*

cherrypiewines.com | [@cherrypiewines](https://www.instagram.com/cherrypiewines)

P

new
products

7



8



9



10



11



12

7. DEEP EDDY ORANGE

From the fastest-growing, American-made spirits brand in the U.S. comes Deep Eddy Orange, a fresh twist on a classic juice flavor. Made in small batches at the Austin-based Distillery, this naturally flavored vodka is produced with Texas aquifer water and real fruit juice for a smooth, refreshing taste. Poured straight in the glass or paired with simple mixers, Deep Eddy Orange has broad appeal. 70 proof.

\$ SRP: \$19.99
deepeddyvodka.com

10. MESSER DEL FAUNO ROSÉ

Rosé is called rosato in Italy, and Messer del Fauno is a stellar example. Made using the traditional skin contact method, once the ideal shade of pink is achieved the wine finishes fermenting in stainless steel. This classic method combines the fragrant scents of a white wine and the elegant freshness of a young red. The wine displays light berry and peach aromas and palate notes of citrus zest, watermelon and minerals. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$12.99
bruncowine.com

8. ROBERT MONDAVI PRIVATE SELECTION BOURBON BARREL-AGED CHARDONNAY

Following the 2016 release of their Bourbon Barrel-Aged Cabernet, Robert Mondavi Private Selection has released a 2015 Bourbon Barrel-Aged Chardonnay with a Monterey AVA. After nine months in American oak, the wine spends two more months in a combination of new and used bourbon barrels, yielding a deep, rich, toasty flavor with aromas of vanilla and baking spices. Creamy and concentrated, it holds plenty of appeal for current Cali Chard fans.

\$ SRP: \$13.99
robertmondaviprivateselection.com

11. TYRCONNELL 16 YEAR OLD IRISH WHISKEY

Named in honor of an Irish racehorse victorious against all odds, The Tyrconnell® whiskey is now betting on a new expression. The Tyrconnell is rare among Irish whiskeys in that it is double-distilled; this creates a whiskey that carries a delicate flavor atop a creamier, more viscous presence. The limited-edition Tyrconnell 16 Year Old Single Malt showcases the benefit of extra aging. Best on the rocks or neat to showcase the fruity nose, rich flavor and spicy finish. 92 proof.

\$ SRP: \$100
beamsuntory.com

9. AMERICAN HARVEST VODKA

American Harvest Vodka—handcrafted from organic American wheat, certified organic ingredients and Snake River water—is getting a makeover after having been acquired recently by the Beach Whiskey Company. The vodka is on-trend, with both organic and craft appeal. The new look is clean and evocative, emphasizing the vodka's purity and organic wheat origin. 80 proof.

\$ SRP: \$24.99
americanharvestvodka.com

12. AVA GRACE WINE COLLECTION


New from The Wine Group, the AVA Grace Wine Collection has debuted nationally with a line of California Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot and a Red Blend. The brand celebrates the delicate beauty and rich terrain of the vineyard, and the wines are made by Andrea Beltran in an approachable style—at an affordable price point of \$11.99 across the line. Available nationwide.

\$ SRP: \$11.99
avagracevineyards.com

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE? GET THE WHOLE PICTURE

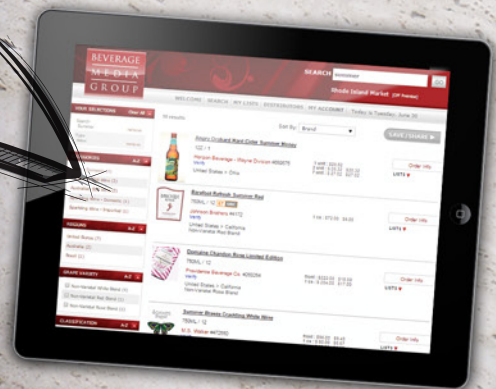
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